

IRAQ IN TURMOIL

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES OF DR. ALI AL-WARDI,
FROM THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE TO KING FEISAL



CDR. YOUSSEF H. ABOUL-ENEIN, USN



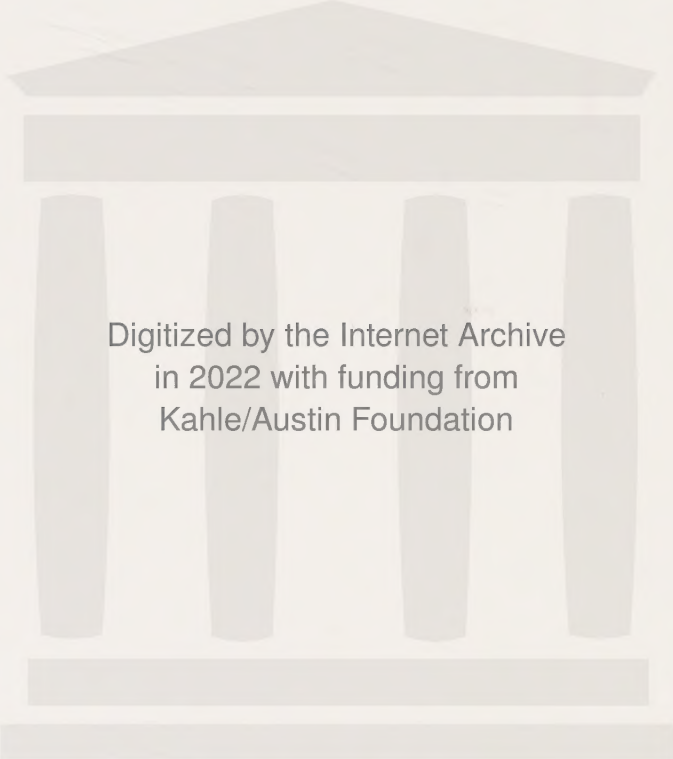
IRAQ^{IN} TURMOIL

The Naval Institute Press and the U.S. Army journal *Armor* are pleased to offer a collection of essays by the late Dr. Ali al-Wardi (1913–1995) that highlight Iraq's social, political, and military history. The collection draws on a multivolume work in Arabic by a highly respected scholar that is found in the libraries of Iraq's intelligentsia and is read by Iraqis throughout the Middle East, including insurgents.

Introducing English readers to this seminal work, Aboul-Enein contends that it is impossible to truly understand the Iraqi character without delving into al-Wardi's history. The book tells how the Ottomans, British, and Safavid Persians dealt with sectarianism in Iraq and describes the battles fought over key areas. It also examines the dynamics of a year-long insurgency against the British in 1920 that ended only when London engineered a political solution to its advantage—the imposition of a monarchy under King Feisal. Exploring ways in which previous powers attempted to manage Iraq and containing many lessons that are useful when analyzing conflict in the region, *Iraq in Turmoil* also explores how the British continued their divide-and-conquer policies when they took over Iraq after World War I. One of the more interesting incidents is the 1922 fatwa crafted jointly by Iraqi Sunni and Shiite clerics, sanctioning war on Wahhabi tribesmen raiding Iraq from Arabia, dispelling the simplistic notion that Sunnis and Shiites do

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YOUSSEF H. ABOUL-ENEIN

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Disclaimer: *The statements of fact, opinion, or analysis expressed in this book are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense, the U.S. Government, or the U.S. Army.*

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THE DEDICATION OF THIS BOOK IS SIMPLE:



To Arlington Cemetery Section 60,
to the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines, and
to our families who enable us to defend the United States.



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PREFACE

The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.

—William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*

Recent events in Egypt, Tunisia, and Bahrain demand that America's military have a deeper understanding of the Middle East. This cannot be accomplished without delving into seminal texts written in the Arabic language by Arabs. The Naval Institute Press and the United States Army journal, *Armor*, are pleased to offer a unique collection of essays highlighting Iraq's social, political, and military history from a purely Iraqi perspective. Dr. Ali al-Wardi (1913–1995, hereafter referred to as al-Wardi) attended the American University of Beirut in 1943 and then traveled to the United States to attain his master's and doctorate degrees in sociology at the University of Texas in 1948 and 1950, respectively. He returned to Iraq and spent his career teaching, but his main legacy is an eight-volume work in Arabic that was published from late 1969 to early 1976. His research is reputed to have begun as early as 1951, and represents more than two decades of work that highlights the history of Iraq from the arrival of the Ottomans to the monarchy of King Feisal I in 1925, and extends into the founding of modern Saudi Arabia in 1932, as it relates to the Hashemite Iraqi Kingdom.

Although it is eight books of four hundred pages each, it is best described as six volumes published in eight books. Volumes 5 and 6 of the collection are in two books. For the purpose of this study, I will refer to the collection as being

made up of eight volumes. These volumes are titled *Lamahat Ijtima'iya min Tarikh al-'Iraq al-Hadith* (*Social Glimpses of Iraqi Modern History*), and initially were published by Baghdad's Al-Irshad Publishers. It would go through a second printing in 1991 by Kufan Printers in London, and then be reissued a third time in 2007 by Alwarrak Publishing of London. Portions of al-Wardi's work were published in German in 1972, with parts of English abridged translations in 2008 by Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston, New York, and in 2010 by Lambert Academic Publishing in Saarbrücken, Germany.

This Naval Institute volume provides an abridged translation with commentary of the most significant aspects of the work for an American military audience, coupled with analysis of all eight books. There is a special emphasis on areas of interest to the American professional military reader. Of note, al-Wardi's entire volumes, although outdated, are so influential among Iraqis they can be downloaded for free in its original Arabic version from several websites such as <http://www.aliraqi.org/>, a site dedicated to Iraqi history and culture. Despite passing away in 1995, this so-called father of Iraqi sociology has his own Facebook site (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ali-Al-Wardi/101952213176352>), in which thousands of Iraqis and many other Arabs meet to read and discuss his work.

IRAQI INSURGENT USES AL-WARDI'S VOLUMES

It is an extraordinary work, and I first was drawn to it by a serving U.S. Army officer in Iraq in 2007, who was interacting with a uniquely learned detainee. This detainee used Iraqi history to incite the population against coalition forces. Apparently, al-Wardi's volumes are among the reading selections offered to Iraqi prisoners. The detainee mentioned these volumes as a required source to exploit the imagery of Iraq's history with the Shiites, Sunnis, Kurds, Wahhabis, and Persians to their advantage. Upon getting this tip and a few pages of the volume, I acquired a set of al-Wardi's volumes from the Library of Congress Middle East Reading Room and set about reading the materials. What I uncovered was a treasure trove of historical information vital to the understanding of Iraq and its relationship with Arabia, Syria, Egypt, and Iran, as well as to an understanding of the internal relationship between the tribes and the great regional powers, in particular the Ottomans and the Persians. I took it upon myself to highlight this important Arabic work to America's

military readers; Ms. Charlotte Bourgeois from the U.S. Army journal *Armor* was convinced of the value of this material in educating our forces in the human terrain of Iraq. Pages reveal not only the history of Iraq, but also of Persia, Shiite Islam, Sunni Islam, Ottoman Turkey, and much more. The result was an exposé, not a verbatim translation of al-Wardi's work, that was published in eleven essays by the U.S. Army journal *Armor* between 2009 and late 2010. It represents hours of translation, analysis, and synthesis. Also, al-Wardi's book was designed for an Arab audience, and so many concepts that are inherent in the consciousness of the region needed to be explained to a Western reader. There are no endnotes or footnotes, as the objective is to bring al-Wardi's work to a wider American military readership. It is also an attempt to highlight the importance of teaching America's future policy makers and military leaders directly from Arabic sources. Although al-Wardi's work is a sociopolitical history, I focused on aspects of his work that military personnel would find of interest, from battles and tribal insurrections to the powers that swept through Iraq and their methods of managing the region's complex tribes and sects.

Several people who deployed to Iraq have used this *Armor* series I published before traveling to the region. Often, they asked me two questions: When is the next series coming out? and, Will all essays be collected in a single volume? I was honored that during the process of writing and publishing, Naval Institute Press took an interest in this series, and that, in conjunction with *Armor*, the Press sought to collect all eleven of these essays on al-Wardi's modern history of Iraq into a single volume. The idea was to make all eleven essays accessible to Americans with an interest in or who are deploying to Iraq. Al-Wardi offers a historical narrative of how the Ottomans, Persians, British, and the newly created Iraqi monarchy have dealt with tribes, religious groups, and insurgencies. His work is an invaluable resource that, until the publication of the essays in *Armor* and now collected in this volume by Naval Institute Press, has been available only to Arabic-speaking readers.

There are hidden gems in al-Wardi's work, such as his story of when Iraq's Shiites and Sunnis banded together, issued a joint fatwa (religious opinion), and organized to push back Wahhabi raids from Arabia in 1922. These Iraqis understood the difference between proselytizing and brigandage. It is my earnest hope that this book not only will stimulate debate on Iraq's history,

but also will equip Americans serving in Iraq with a better understanding of Iraqi history.

The book is organized with each chapter representing one essay in the series that was published in *Armor* from early 2009 to late 2010. Each chapter contains a foreword written by a senior officer, senior civilian, professor, or librarian. These individuals have meant the most to my own journey towards understanding the region and to my quest to teach others about the complexities of the Middle East and nuances of Islam. It is my earnest hope that this book will not only stimulate debate on Iraq's history, but also equip Americans serving in Iraq with a better understanding of Iraqi history through Middle Eastern eyes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

What is true by lamplight is not always true by sunlight.

—Joseph Joubert (1754–1824), French Moralist

I would like to express thanks for those who helped bring this project into fruition, starting with U.S. Army journal *Armor* and its editor in chief, Ms. Charlotte “Christy” Bourgeois. Her support enabled the series to be published in an eleven-part installment in *Armor* and made it available to American combat units deploying to Iraq. I also would like to thank the staff of *Armor* for their artistic creativity and enhancement of my work by merging my words with illustrations, photos, and maps acquired from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Each chapter benefited from the foreword of senior officers and civilians. Each of these officers and civilians is a person who has mentored and supported me throughout my career, and fostered my own intellect. I thank each of them sincerely.

I also thank the junior officers, sailors, civilians, and colleagues who made each chapter better through their edits and who educated me along the way. A book is never truly the work of just one person.

In addition, I would like thank my brothers Lt. Cdr. Faisal H. Aboul-Enein, USPHS, and Capt. Basil H. Aboul-Enein, USAF. They have made an older brother proud. I am especially proud that all three of us are in the service of the United States.

I also would like to express my gratitude to my parents, Dr. Hassan Y. Aboul-Enein and Nagla Mousa al-Mojaddadi. They continue to shape who I am. As recently as 2011 my mother and father joined thousands of Egyptians in Tahrir Square in Cairo partaking of liberty and cleaning up after the eighteen-day protest that ended the rule of Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak. Afterwards my mother, with optimism in her voice, said to me, “I think I will vote now!”

Any good book is the product of help from excellent librarians, and this volume would not have been possible without the help of librarians at the John T. Hughes Library at the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Defense University Library, and the Library of Congress Middle East Reading Room. These libraries made the earliest published edition (1969 to 1976) of the late Dr. Ali al-Wardi’s volumes available to me for study, translation, and research. Any library is a haven, and the Hughes Library provided me a quiet place to work after-hours. While visiting Norfolk, Virginia, on official travel, I also was pleased to be able to use the Joint Forces Staff College’s Ike Skelton Library. Significant portions of Chapters 7 and 8 were written in Norfolk, off-hours, while on temporary duty assignment.

I also need to express my gratitude to my wife Cheryl Anne and two children Maryam Katherine and Omar Youssef, who endured many weekends of their Dad thinking, reading, and writing this work. Like many military families, they enable the tip of the spear in America’s defense.

My thanks go to Mr. Tom Cutler of the Naval Institute Press who since 2002 has been a friend who continues to nag me about my writings and transform them into what is now my second book. Cartographer Christopher Robinson made my hand-drawn maps come alive, and Ms. Alison Hope edited the entire manuscript before final publication, adding precision to my thoughts and words.

Finally, I thank the following, who helped edit, discuss, and refine this work:

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Chapter 11 and Concluding Thoughts: Cdr. Scott Olivolo, MSC, USN

Finally, this represents my understanding of al-Wardi's work. Any errors or omissions are my own.

1

THE EARLY OTTOMAN AND SAFAVID PERSIAN PERIOD (FOURTEENTH– EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES)

Foreword by Brig. Gen. H. R. McMaster, U.S. Army

Soldiers who have conducted counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan understand the importance of developing and understanding the culture and history of the regions in which they are fighting. We are engaged in wars in which leaders must understand the capabilities of their forces in context of the enemy, the terrain, and the population. Cultural and historical understanding is important on many levels. It is important to understand the ethnic, tribal, and sectarian dynamics that shape popular perceptions of our forces, our indigenous partners, and the enemy. Commander Aboul-Enein and *Armor* magazine have given leaders charged with preparing their troopers for missions in Iraq an invaluable gift in making the work of Ali al-Wardi accessible.

As Professor Steve Metz of the U.S. Army War College has pointed out, there are two principal battlegrounds in counterinsurgency: intelligence and perception. Intelligence without the context of cultural and historical understanding is of limited value. Cultural and historical understanding is essential to defining the nature of the conflict, understanding the nature of the enemy, identifying the fears and aspirations of various communities, and evaluating sources of information. It is also important to understanding the second- and third-order effects of our actions to ensure that we do not confuse activity with progress towards achieving our goals and

objectives. Historical and cultural understanding is also important to ensuring Soldier discipline and moral conduct while conducting operations in challenging and ambiguous counterinsurgency environments. An understanding of the environment reduces uncertainty and uncertainty is a major source of combat stress that can lead to the erosion of discipline and ethical standards. An understanding of the historical memories and perspectives of the population allows Soldiers to empathize with the people. Empathy, in turn, helps Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines understand the need to exercise restraint and protect the population while aggressively pursuing brutal and murderous enemies. Achieving a level of cultural understanding that permits effective counterinsurgency operations requires education and the first step is reading history.

Our Regiment was introduced indirectly to the writings of Ali al-Wardi by a Foreign Area officer, Maj. Dan Barnard, as we prepared for operations in northern Iraq. The insights we gained from Dan's summaries of the work's themes, further informed and qualified by his research on Iraq, helped lay a foundation for understanding the enemy and the various cultural and historical dynamics with which our troopers and Iraqi partners would interact. This series of high-quality articles in one of our nation's premier professional military journals will be of urgent interest to any Soldier who will serve in Iraq, but will also prove valuable to foreign area officers and others serving in the Middle East.

On the surface, al-Wardi's work, *Social Glimpses of Iraqi Modern History*, appears to offer a comprehensive and detailed Iraqi history through the early twentieth century, culminating with the 1920 Insurrection against British Occupation and the formation of the Iraqi monarchy. This history is, in itself, relevant to our troopers and leaders. Perhaps most importantly, his writings shed light onto how groups within Iraq have used historical narratives to construct their contemporary identities.

A basic understanding of how modern Iraqis perceive themselves is critical to understanding the operational and tactical environments in which we are operating. Al-Wardi provides a window

into the stories and legends that shaped the fragmented identities of modern Iraq, stories and legends that expose a broad array of jealousies, mistrust, and revenge for ancient grievances. Al-Wardi attempts to distill the social psychology of these various groups through sweeping discussions of the Iraqi character, especially the dichotomy between tribe and town, as well as the roles and reputations of the Sunni and Shia communities and their influential *ulama* (Islamic scholars). These characterizations illuminate the contested identity of the Iraqi population. Millennia of urban culture are in constant interaction and tension with the tribes of the desert. Smaller rivalries between tribes operate within grand clashes between two empires: the Sunni Ottoman Empire and the Shia Persian Safavid Empire. Al-Wardi's history is not dry and antiquarian; modern readers with experience in Iraq will find deeply relevant the social fissures created by wars that left behind an inheritance of sectarian, ethnic, and tribal divisions. The suspicions, prejudices, and doubts of today, al-Wardi shows, are rooted in perceived sins of the past.

The narratives within al-Wardi's multivolume opus include stereotypic profiles of a cast of Iraqi characters ranging from the Sunni Bedouin tribesman of the western desert, to the agrarian and commercial riverine townsmen, to the Shia *Mujtahids* (clergy) of the holy shrine cities. These narratives and profiles help educate Americans on the iconic and legendary past of Iraq. Although historians might argue the details of his accounts and sociologists might challenge his portrayals of the various communities, al-Wardi remains valuable in understanding a commonly held sense of Iraq's historical memory today.

Soldiers and leaders should keep in mind that Iraqi historical symbolism can be used for good or ill. Images of a shared Iraqi past can help bind together a fragile nation as the post-Saddam state develops. However, that same history can also be abused to stir up dormant hatreds and promote division. Ancient Shia grievances against Sunni Ottoman massacres and misgovernment can fan a sense of revenge and exclusion of Sunnis today. Historical

Sunni anger over Safavid Iran's influence or fears of Shia theocratic abuses can help motivate Sunni rejection of the Shia-majority Iraqi government. Narrower grievances against the Kurds, the Turkmen, or any of the other smaller Iraqi minority communities, can also be extracted from al-Wardi's history, and further aggravate modern-day conflicts. Even micro-conflicts based in tribal vendetta or town suspicion of the Bedouin can find ample historical basis. By comprehensively educating soldiers about the full context of Iraqi history, reading al-Wardi helps leaders, alongside their Iraqi partners, begin to understand and counter specious claims of various extremist leaders and organizations.

Reading al-Wardi might also help combat common fallacies including broad generalizations about "the Arabs" or "Iraqis," particularly those fueled by the recent fascination with T. E. Lawrence's pithy axioms for dealing with "Arabs." Al-Wardi is a useful antidote to these broad racial assumptions, with his more nuanced description of the social cleavages between regions, towns, tribes, and ethnicities. Counterinsurgency in Iraq has proven to its many veterans to be a very local mission that demands a nuanced understanding of unique and shifting conditions. Understanding the seams of resentments and accusations of the factions within a town, or even within a neighborhood, is a key to effective operations. Al-Wardi is an excellent resource for the Soldiers to begin to gain the understanding necessary for success in the complex tactical environment of Iraq.

Another valuable perspective that al-Wardi provides the Western reader is an understanding of popular perceptions of foreign invaders in mainstream Iraqi culture. Depictions of foreign rule, be it Ottoman, Safavid, or British, accompanied by lurid tales of humiliation and oppression at the hands of the armies of occupation, are a recurring theme in al-Wardi's histories and in the popular consciousness of Iraq. Al-Wardi devotes hundreds of pages in particular to the violent tribal uprising in 1920 against British occupation forces (under the League of Nations Mandate) that irrevocably altered the British project in Mesopotamia. Al-Wardi's

narrative highlights the importance of clarifying our intentions and building relationships with the population based on a clear communication of intentions and respect.

Regardless of disagreements among historians regarding the actual facts of the Revolt, the heroic narrative related by al-Wardi is significant to American Soldiers. In this popular portrayal of the Revolt, tribal leaders rebel against the arrogant and insulting British occupation, asserting their sovereignty through a tribal call to arms strengthened by jihad. Despite the actual military failure of the rebellion, this legendary version of the Revolt taught in Baathist schoolbooks depicts the British being thrown out through the brave and bold action of valiant Iraqi tribesmen. The symbolism of this revolt remained so lasting and powerful that Saddam Hussein showed a film depicting the 1920 Revolt on the eve of the American invasion in 2003. Since the beginning of the American occupation, the revolt has remained an open symbol of nationalism and a violent rejection of “foreign rule” among the current insurgents, ranging from Shia clerics invoking the “sons of the 1920 Revolt” to Sunni insurgent groups naming themselves, “the 1920 Revolution Brigades.” The value to the soldier is in understanding how some insurgent and militia organizations today cloak themselves in this patriotic symbolism and see themselves as nationalists. The silver lining to the dark cloud of insurgent violence is that appeals to patriotism, no matter how misguided, imply a loyalty to the Iraqi nation. Hence, as with many members of the current Sunni “Awakening,” former insurgents who see themselves as nationalists can be persuaded to cooperate with a sovereign Iraqi government and with our forces if they understand our desire to help them build a strong Iraqi state. In sharp opposition are the nihilists: the apocalyptic *takfiri* (declaration of apostasy) extremists (of either Sunni or Shia variety) that cannot countenance cooperation with any representative government.

Iraq today is not a mirror of the past. It is not composed of the same Bedouin tribes as the time of the Islamic conquests. Nor is Iran reprising a role from the ancient Ottoman-Safavid conflict.

Nor are American soldiers and Coalition partners walking in the imperial footsteps of the British Mandate. Iraq is not even the revolutionary country of the 1950s and 1960s, awash in Arab nationalism and Baathist ideology, during which al-Wardi was writing. However, modern Iraqis do have powerful, if fragmentary, memories and cultural associations of all of that history, and al-Wardi is an excellent place for students of Iraq to begin their studies.

EARLY SHIIISM IN PERSIA

We cannot understand Iraq without delving into the early history of Shiism in Persia. After the death of Prophet Muhammad in 632 CE, a schism developed between Muslims over succession. This dispute digressed into two major civil wars and a religious schism between Shiat Ali (the Party of Ali), the Shiites, and the majority of Muslims who believed that succession was not based solely on the hereditary rule of Prophet Muhammad. Shiites have held that Ali and the Prophet's family have been denied their rightful place as leaders of Muslims. Another name for Shiites is Ahl al-Bayt (followers of Muhammad's house), whereas the Sunnis are commonly referred to as the Ahl al-Sunna (followers of Muhammad's path).

Persia (modern-day Iran) was primarily Sunni and remained so until the sixteenth century CE. Muslims did not enter en masse into Shiism until the arrival of the Safavid Dynasty in 1501. Before the Safavids, Shiites in Persia lived in Nishapur and Qom, with a few minority Shiite clusters in Isfahan, Shiraz, Tabriz, and Khorasan. The gradual transition of Persia into a Shiite nation had a profound impact on Iraq, since most of the Shiite holy sites were in Iraq. Over the course of hundreds of years, Iraq would evolve into a Shiite Arab majority dependent on Persian Shiite clergy. This dynamic has changed in the wake of Operation Iraqi Freedom as more Arab Shiites take control of their own affairs—a scenario that is being watched and managed by Iran.

One of the main schisms between Sunnis and Shiites is over the concept of *shafaa* (intercession), which is a general belief on the use of the *sahaba* (the Prophet Muhammad's companions) as intercessors between themselves and God. *Shafaa* is frowned upon by Sunni Muslim purists who believe there are no intercessors between humankind and God. Over the course of early Islamic history, some clerics began to rank-order intercessors based on their

closeness to the Prophet Muhammad and assign them a more exalted status based on their relationship to the Prophet. During this time, some Muslims began to view the caliphate (the system of Islamic governance created after Muhammad's death in 632 CE) as based on a person's lineage rather than on competent or consensus governance. This formed an essential element of what would evolve into the Shiite view of Ali's absolute requirement to succeed Muhammad, and the evolution of the twelve imams from the Ahl al-Bayt as intercessors. Sunnis reject these notions as blasphemous innovations that detract from the worship of God.

THE JANISSARIES

Dr. al-Wardi devotes several sections of his book on the evolution of the Janissary Corps, which led to a revolution in military affairs that did much to expand the Ottoman Empire in its early stages. The earliest forms of marching to the beat of drums and the integration of cannon and infantry would be realized by the Janissary Corps. In 1326 Orkhan (Orhan), one of the founders of the Ottoman Dynasty who succeeded the founder Osman I, founded an army made up of non-Muslim (mainly Christian) youth captured from the Balkan provinces, enslaved, and educated in Islam, the arts, and warfare. Their loyalty was to the sultan only. Sheikh Bektash, a cleric from Khorasan (modern-day Tajikistan and Afghanistan), who had a reputation for piety, was invited by the sultan to minister to this innovative military formation. Sheikh Bektash gave the formation the name *Yeni Chari* (meaning new army, in the Turkic language), pronounced *Inkishari* in Arabic and Janissary in English. He served as figurehead for the Janissaries and was called "father" by those that the Turkish public called the Boys of Hajj Bektash (the earliest manifestation of what would evolve into the Ottoman Janissary Corps).

Sheikh Bektash assigned a cleric to each battalion. Over time, ranks were assigned based on the kitchen mess because Janissaries believed they were eating from the dining table of the sultan. Today in Iraq these ranks remain in last names such as the Jarbashi family, a name that comes from the Jarbashi (kettle holder) pasha (an honorific title equivalent to a British lord that is earned through merit), a senior rank in the early Janissaries. The Bektashi order of Sufism is a Shiite order and initially included the concept of rejecting and even insulting the first three caliphs (Abu Bakr, Omar, and Uthman). The Bektashi

order was eventually compelled to alter its Shiite views. Today the order is a Sunni Sufi order. The Janissaries' appetite for the conscription of Christian children drove some of the expansion of the early Ottoman period into the Balkans. Major victories of the Ottomans were the defeat of Tamerlane in 1402 at the Battle of Ankara, also referred to as the Battle of Angora, and the capture of Constantinople in 1453. The Ottomans took Constantinople, which they renamed Istanbul, with 250,000 troops, 180 warships, and cannons, the latter of which were used in that battle for the first time in written record.

Safavids began as an obscure Sufi order in what is now Iranian Azerbaijan. The order was known as Qizilbashi, meaning red heads; they were named for their headdress that had twelve red cockades in memory of the twelve imams. In 1501 Ismail began his own movement of Qizilbash warriors that conquered the Caucasus, Persia, and portions of Iraq. In 1508 Ismail crowned himself shah, and brought order in the eyes of Baghdad residents. After visiting the tombs of Hussein (Prophet Muhammad's second grandson, through Fatima) and Ali (Prophet Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law, and the fourth caliph), he refurbished Shiite holy sites and ordered the demolition of the tomb of Abu Hanifa, the founder the Hanafi School of Sunni Islam; Sunnis considered that tomb to be a holy site.

Ismail I was the first of several Safavid kings of Persia, a dynasty that lasted until 1760 and that would propagate Shiism in Persia, north Afghanistan, India, and Iraq. Ismail would retain Baghdad until 1512, in which year he was attacked by Ottoman forces under Sultan Selim I (called "the Grim"). Selim elicited a fatwa from Ottoman clerics sanctioning the killing of Shiites as apostates, and a round of Shiite purges began. Selim I tasked a special security apparatus to eliminate 70,000 Shiites, of which 30,000 were jailed and 40,000 were killed. In 1514 the Ottomans defeated the Safavids in the Battle of Chaldiran. The Janissaries refused to press the rout of Safavid forces because they lacked supplies and appropriate clothing for the winter. Selim was livid, and had Janissary leaders executed for not pressing the attack deep into Persia. The Ottomans conquered Baghdad, Karbala (the site of Hussein's massacre in 680 CE), and what is today modern-day Iraq, and extended as far as Tabriz in what is now Iran.

In 1516 Ottoman cannons swept away the Mameluks in Syria. The Ottomans then crossed the Sinai, taking Egypt in 1517 and defeating the re-

maintaining Mameluks in Cairo. Touman Bey (bey is the Ottoman equivalent of the British “sir”), leader of the Mameluks, was hung from Bab Zuweila, one of Cairo’s gates.

Muhammad al-Mutawakkil, whose lineage traces back to the Abbasid caliphs, lived in Cairo. The Ottomans, and Sultan Selim in particular, sought al-Mutawakkil to obtain from him the mantle and sword of Prophet Muhammad, as well as the keys to the Kaaba. (According to Islamic theosophy, the Kaaba is the house of monotheistic worship built by the first man, Prophet Adam, and rebuilt by Prophet Abraham in what is now Mecca.) Next, al-Mutawakkil transferred power to Selim and made him caliph and Commander of the Faithful in 1517, a title the Ottomans would keep until 1924. When Selim took the mantle of caliph, however, some clerics challenged him, arguing that the caliph must come from Prophet Muhammad’s lineage.

In 1524 Ismail I, the Safavid founder, died; his son Tahmasap I reigned from 1524 to 1576. When Tahmasap took the throne he was ten years old, and his Ottoman counterpart was Suleiman the Magnificent; Suleiman sent the young shah a congratulatory note, while simultaneously preparing for war. Alarmed by the Ottoman preparations, the Safavids wrote to the Hungarian monarch seeking a common alliance against the Ottomans. Word of this secret correspondence between the Shiite Safavids and Christian Hungarians leaked, and Suleiman responded by condemning to death all Persians currently held captive. The Ottoman armies drove towards Tabriz despite the cold weather and lack of supplies as well as proper clothing that eventually caused Ottoman forces to drift south towards Baghdad to attempt to retake the Iraqi capital from Safavid Persian forces.

In addition to Ottoman infantry and cavalry, the Ottoman integrated cannons for the first time in combat. This was the Persian’s first experience with cannons; Safavid forces retreated and left Baghdad exposed for the taking. The Ottoman reconquest of Baghdad occurred in December 1534; Suleiman forbade looting and pillaging since the city had surrendered without a fight.

Suleiman visited Shiite holy sites, ordering the renovations started by Shah Ismail I, his foe, to be completed. He continued the stipends for clerics who serviced these tombs and improved on the Husseiniyah Canal to bring freshwater from the Euphrates into Karbala. He also rebuilt the Sunni shrine of the tomb of Abu Hanifa, which had been demolished by Shah Ismail in his

conquest of Baghdad in 1512. Suleiman established baths and markets, built the Baghdad citadel and garrisoned it with 150 troops, and built one of his large cannons. This cannon, reputed to weigh twenty tons and to be able to fire a smoothed spherical stone ball between 880 and 1,200 pounds in weight, was serviced by two hundred soldiers. It assumed a mythological status among Baghdad's residents. Since that cannon no longer exists in modern-day Baghdad we are left with the mythologic descriptions of former Baghdad residents, but their description fits the cannon later used by Ottoman sultan Mehmet II in the siege of Constantinople in 1453.

Shah Ismail I made it a point to publicly disavow and insult the first three caliphs (Abu Bakr, Omar, and Uthman). These insults were as uncomfortable and blasphemous for many Muslims of the period as they are today among most Sunnis and a few Shiites. These caliphs were Prophet Muhammad's closest companions, and intermarriage between Prophet Muhammad's companions and his daughters preserved and expanded the infant Islamic society after Muhammad's death. For example, Abu Bakr's daughter Ayesha and Omar's daughter Hafsa were among Prophet Muhammad's wives, and Uthman was married to two of Muhammad's daughters. These three companions (Abu Bakr, Omar, and Uthman) and women such as Muhammad's wife Ayesha were a source of many of Muhammad's sayings and descriptions of his actions that would evolve into the *Hadith* (collections of the Prophet's sayings). Ayesha, as his wife, is a source of many sayings on how Muhammad behaved as a spouse and towards children, which was progressive by seventh-century standards. Among Sunnis, these three companions were designated as among the ten blessed to go immediately to paradise upon death. (The ten were Muhammad's closest companions such as Abu Bakr and Omar and include such important Islamic figures as Bilal, the freed Abyssinian slave who fought valiantly for the Prophet and uttered the first call to prayer in a mosque.) This designation of the ten companions of the Prophet to be granted immediate access to paradise is an Islamic form of creating disciples among Sunni Muslims. The Safavid Shia commanded their Sunni subjects to disparage these early and respected companions of the Prophet for what the Shia considered the denial of the caliphate to Ali soon after the Prophet's death, and the murder of his son Hussein, in the field of Karbala in 680 CE. Disparaging these

early companions of Muhammad such as Ayesha his wife, Omar, and Abu Bakr, was considered blasphemous and distasteful to many Sunni Muslims.

Shah Ismail began the campaign to impose Shiism upon Persia, changing the character of Persia and impacting the region with the increase in Shiite converts, both those who were forced to convert and those who actually believed the Shia narrative of the first three caliphs cheating Ali of his destiny to rule Muslims after Muhammad's death. The significance of Iraq as the spiritual epicenter of Shiism continued to grow, because this was the place where a significant number of the twelve imams are entombed, including perhaps the most important imams, Ali and his son Hussein.

Hurling insults at the three caliphs (whom Shiites believe usurped the caliphate from Ali) became a test of loyalty for Shah Ismail when dealing with the Persians. If the shah detected hesitation in the person being asked to curse the companions of Muhammad, the "infidel" would be killed. The shah then ordered the public reading of insults of the three caliphs in markets, mosques, and streets as a means not only of affirming this new state doctrine, but also, more importantly, of detecting dissenters for liquidation. Al-Wardi uses the example of Galileo's repudiation of his celestial theories, when Galileo repudiated his lifetime work in astronomy to save himself from the Vatican Inquisition. The author compares this event to famous Sunni cleric Shams al-Deen al-Jafari who was compelled to repudiate the three caliphs to save himself from persecution.

Shah Ismail was the first to organize the public mourning rituals commemorating the martyrdom of Hussein; that day is now known as Ashoura, and falls on the tenth day of the Islamic month of Muharram. The first Ashoura rituals were conducted among the Buyyids around 1055 CE without much fanfare and were subsequently neglected until the mid-sixteenth century. Shah Ismail revived the practice after five hundred years of neglect and added the *taziyyah* rituals (mourning passion plays commemorating the martyrdom of Hussein in 680 CE) to give it both a somber and a carnival-like atmosphere in order to play upon the emotions of his subjects to convert more Sunnis, Zoroastrians, and Sufis to Shiism. Another innovation of Islamic practice ordered by Shah Ismail was the addition of the phrase "Ali is the friend of God" at the end of the prayer call. This addition still stirs debate among Shiites today, who believe, like Sunnis, that the call to prayer was determined and uttered

when Muhammad was alive and that any change to this call to prayer is an innovation. In addition, some Muslims believed that calling Ali the “friend of God” detracts from Prophet Muhammad being the “last messenger of God” until the second coming of Jesus.

SHIISM TAKES A FORMALIZED STRUCTURE IN PERSIA

Shah Ismail died in 1524 at the age of thirty-eight. The new shah, Tahmasap I, only ten years old, believed that he could not combine the functions of leader of the faith and the Safavid state, so he delegated this responsibility to the *fuyaha* (Muslim clerics). The new shah and his ministers enticed a known cleric from Baalbek, Sheikh Ali al-Karkhi, to manage the Safavid Empire’s religious affairs. The cleric would travel from Baalbek to Qazwain, the first capital of the Safavid Empire, to meet the shah and his advisers. The shah then issued a *firman* (decree) to be distributed throughout the empire that Sheikh Ali was the deputy to the hidden imam, and that he was to be obeyed.

Some Arab and Persian historians, including al-Wardi, consider Sheikh Ali not only the first state-sponsored spiritual leader in Shiism, but also in effect the actual ruler of the Safavid Empire. Sheikh Ali affirmed and made the Twelver version of Shiism and the Shiite Jafari School of Islam the official religion of the Safavid Empire. He enforced morality, organized the clergy, and appointed every cleric in every town and village to teach his approved doctrine. There would be dissent on Sheikh Ali’s power, not only from Sunnis and non-Islamic faiths present in Persia, but also from Shiites. Sheikh Ibrahim Qutaifi, a senior Shiite cleric, argued that any government that does not have the missing imam (Muhammad al-Mahdi, who went into occultation in 874 CE) as its head is an oppressive and imperfect regime. The shah and his government-appointed chief cleric Sheikh Ali opposed clerics like Qutaifi, and wanted the clergy to have no place in any government. The shah attempted to entice Qutaifi with gifts. When Qutaifi rejected these gifts, Sheikh Ali chastised him. The reply from Qutaifi was scathing, comparing Sheikh Ali to the second Imam Hassan, who had accepted bribes from Muawiyah in return for Hassan, the older son of Ali, renouncing the caliphate for money. Sheikh Ali marginalized this lone voice among the Shiite clergy, but this argument gained momentum and split the Shiite clergy, a split that has endured into the present day. Sheikh Ali reinstated the Friday prayers, long considered

by Shiites of the period as optional because the prayers were conducted by an oppressive state without the missing imam at its head. He issued propaganda that the shah's government was just and communal prayers were mandatory. One of the Safavid Shiite clerics, Sheikh Hussein Abdel-Samad, settled in Bahrain in the late sixteenth century and introduced the Twelver version of Shiism on the island.

SHAH ABBAS I

In 1588 Shah Abbas I ("the Great") assumed the Safavid throne when he was seventeen. During his reign he faced threats from the West, the Ottomans, the East, and the Uzbek tribes. The Uzbeks had taken over Herat after a nine-month siege. They captured the Imam Rida mosque, looting its treasures, and eventually occupied most of Khorasan (modern-day Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and northern Afghanistan). Shah Abbas made a truce with the Ottomans in 1590 and turned his attention to the Uzbeks. Among the agreements with the Turks was to relinquish Azerbaijan and Georgia, and to stop the public damnations of the three caliphs. This was not an auspicious start but was a smart move, as Abbas could not conduct a two-front war. In 1597 he finally defeated the Uzbeks, which began the golden age of Abbas. He moved his capital from Qazwain to Isfahan, where he built the famous blue-tiled dome mosque and made the new city the envy of the region.

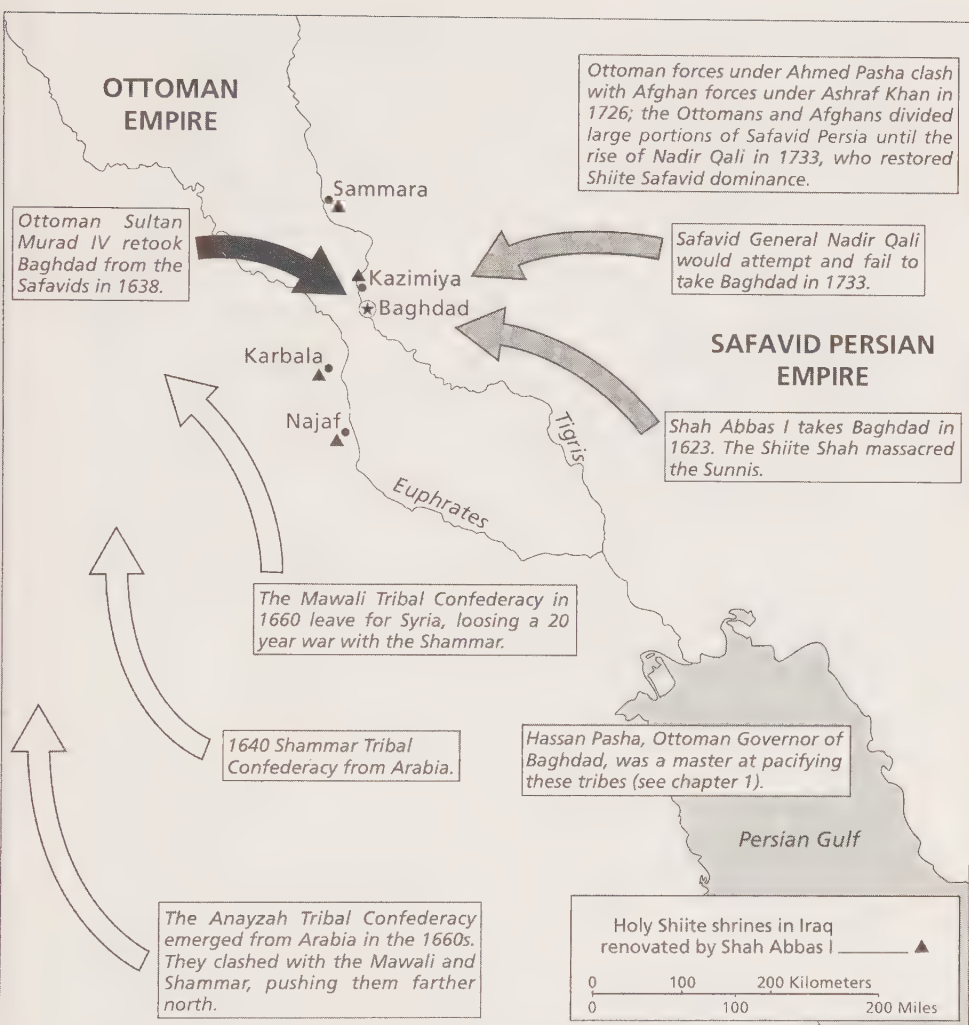
In 1602 Abbas began raids on Ottoman territories retaking Tabriz, for the first time equipping the Safavid armies with cannons. By 1623 he had retaken Baghdad after a three-month siege, and, like his predecessor Ismail I, he destroyed the Sunni tomb of Abu Hanifa. Abbas inaugurated his arrival in Baghdad with a Sunni genocide. Rolls were distributed with the names of Sunni families to be killed. A Shiite cleric, Sheikh Hussein, was so disgusted by these events that he saved thousands of lives by switching Sunni names into Shiite rolls and vouching for the conversion of Sunnis to shiism. This act was an anomaly, however. Abbas then set about a renovation project of the Shiite holy sites of Najaf, Karbala, Samarra, and Kazimiyah.

OTTOMANS REACT: MURAD IV, 1612–1640

Murad IV, the last Ottoman sultan to command in the field, laid siege to Baghdad in 1624, 1630, and 1637. All three attempts to capture the city failed.

In late 1638 the sultan's patience ran out, and he reached for his personal standard, a flag known as al-Tugh al-Hamayuni (the sultan's standard with the Osmanli crest). The sultan issued a *firman* for the fall of Baghdad. He again rode at the head of his army, but was reputed to be in Arab battle dress in order to look like Prophet Muhammad's companions. With him were five cannons that ranged in size from eighteen to twenty pounds. He planted the flag on the outskirts of Azamiyah within sight of the demolished Tomb of Abu Hanifa and nearby mosque, declaring, "I refuse to enter except as conqueror of Baghdad!" From the winter of 1637 until late December 1638 he inspected, drilled, and trained his Janissaries and troops, encouraging them and inspiring them. On December 22, 1638, his cannons opened up. Murad's grand vizier Muhammad Pasha (senior minister) lost his nerve, and Murad chastised his grand vizier to the point that Muhammed Pasha took his sword and led Janissaries to Baghdad. The grand vizier was killed by a grenade while engaged in hand-to-hand combat. Baghdad was taken before the end of 1638. A massacre of Shiites ensued, and it is reputed that those who screamed "*Al-dar and aman!*" were "saved" by Murad, who ordered they not be molested and threatened execution for those who violated this open declaration of sanctuary. (*Al-dar and aman!* translates as "Request for sanctuary!") Muslim chivalry considers the home inviolable. A request for sanctuary was part of Islamic rules of just warfare. In pre-Islamic times Arabs raiding and defeating another tribe would leave provisions and cooking utensils for the women and children of the vanquished.) Murad visited the Abu Hanifa mosque at Azamiyah, remarking, "I have now achieved the purpose of my visit."

Murad departed Baghdad on January 17, 1639, and left behind one of his heavy cannons at the Baghdad Citadel. This cannon was nicknamed Toob (stone thrower) Abu Khuzama, so named because Ottoman cannons threw smoothed spherical stone balls between 880 and 1,200 pounds in weight. Over the years the cannon became an object of veneration, with some residents bringing their infants to place inside the mouth of the cannon three times as a form of blessing. Most Iraqis under Saddam Hussein forgot the significance of the cannon, and it is unclear if it survived the looting that occurred in 2003. The cannon was reputed to be located in a downtown square, and would undoubtedly have been prized for its copper. (Ottoman cannons of the



MAP 1. Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Iraq: Clashes between the Ottomans and Safavid Persians. Arabian Tribes Migrate, Clash, and Push Northward

seventeenth century were cast in copper.) The Safavids of the mid-seventeenth century suffered a series of weak shahs leading up to Shah Suleiman (1666–1694).

Under the Safavid Shahs Suleiman and Hussein, the Safavids found a new charismatic sheikh-ul-Islam, a senior cleric who would direct the empire's religious affairs. This man, Sheikh Mohammad Baqir al-Majlisi, led a zealous inquisition in 1699 and forced conversion of Sunnis, Zoroastrians, Sufi Muslims, Christians, and those "Hellenized" Muslims that had been influenced by Greek classical philosophy. He added much to Shiite orthopraxis, dictating or writing 50,000 words per day. He collected Shiite *hadiths* (sayings and actions) of the imams, and left a written record on everything from sermons, to personal laws, to how to conduct the mourning ceremonies for Hussein, and much more. His *Bihaar al-Anwar* is still used today and is the largest multivolume commentary on Shiism. When the printing press was introduced to Persia during the reign of the Qajar Dynasty (1785–1925), this work was among the first to be published.

TRIBAL EBBS AND FLOWS IN IRAQ

When central imperial authority broke down, be it Safavid or Ottoman, skirmishes between these two powers or outright wars, the Bedouin or tribal trend emerged. These tribal challenges were more prevalent in southern than in northern Iraq; some tribal confederacies evolved into autonomous emirates that only paid tribute to the Ottomans or Safavids. An *ashirah* (clan) could not exist alone and had to ally with other clans and tribes. Urban areas of Iraq and villages guaranteed security by allying with tribes. Aside from protection, the tribes agreed to exact vengeance if there was a wrongful death or murder. A large city like Baghdad, al-Wardi reveals, had districts and city sections allied with different tribes in a delicate balance of influence and protection. In 1640 the Shammar Tribal Confederation migrated from middle Arabia northward towards the Levant, waging a twenty-year war with the tribe occupying the Levant, the Mawali Confederacy. The Mawalis fled southern Iraq and migrated farther north to Syria after ending up on the losing side of a conflict against the Shammar. In the 1660s the Anayzah Tribal Confederacy emerged from Arabia and clashed with the Mawali and Shammar, causing the Shammar to penetrate deeper into Iraq along the Euphrates River.

HASSAN PASHA: OTTOMAN GOVERNOR OF BAGHDAD

From 1638 to 1738 the Ottomans had thirty *valis* (governors) of Baghdad. Al-Wardi's volumes cover most of the Ottoman *valis*, but only a few are deemed worthy of an entire chapter. In Volume 1 the first *vali* mentioned is Hassan Pasha, who took charge of Iraq in 1704 and who used roving cannons, cavalry, and infantry to pacify the tribes of Iraq. His first test came with tribes that sacked Mosul. Hassan Pasha declared the tribes responsible, particularly the Shahwan and Aziz tribes' hypocritical factions for their collaboration with the Persians and for breaking a compact not to harass Ottoman commerce coming from Anatolia (modern-day Turkey), Egypt, or Syria, as a pretext to declare war on them and isolate them from other Iraqi tribes. The Ottoman *vali* led these two wayward tribes into a pass north of Mosul called *al-khanuq* (the chokepoints), and concentrated cannon, musket, and bomb fire on them. (Hassan Pasha prevented assaults on the women of these tribes, however.) With this victory he issued a proclamation declaring that the Prophet Muhammad had renewed social order, and that tribes engaged in sacking Ottoman cities were disloyal to the Ottoman sultan, the only Commander of the Faithful and caliph. "As brigands, you will be dealt with Islamically as brigands and we will reach you even in the ends of the earth. Your beheading is nothing new to us," was how Hassan Pasha opened his rule of Iraq and his tribal pacification campaign, as documented by al-Wardi's volume, who attained Hassan Pasha's proclamation from the Ottoman archives in Baghdad.

In 1708 Hassan Pasha's subjugation of such tribes as the Bani Saad led to the coalescing of tribes into one of the largest confederations in Iraq's history. The confederacy was led by a man named Mughamis al-Manaa of the Murtafiq tribe and included the tribes of Ghazia, Miah, Shammar, Khazaal, Zubaid, al-Asarra, and the Bani Khalid. This confederation numbered more than 100,000 tribal warriors. Hassan Pasha enticed this confederacy to battle him on the outskirts of Basra, an open desert plain. The Ottomans opened up with cannons, muskets, and grenades, which led to 10,000 casualties at the onset and demoralized the tenuous tribal alliance. Hassan Pasha understood the fragility of the tribal confederation and used gold, silver, and promises of protection to undermine the fabric of the alliance just prior to the battle. Hassan Pasha paid in gold for every head provided him from the renegade tribes. The book offers no explanation as to why the tribes opposing Hassan

Pasha did not capitalize on guerilla warfare and instead chose to directly confront the Ottoman forces. The Ottomans also capitalized on the tribal elders refusing to subjugate themselves to a single leader. With any invader in the Middle East there will always be tribes with the invaders and tribes against the invaders; other tribes will switch sides based on the highest bidder and offers of protection. According to al-Wardi's book, the natural state of tribal interest is self-preservation.

FALL OF THE SAFAVIDS

As Hassan Pasha pacified Iraq's tribes, the Safavids were descending towards their fall, which came not at the hands of the Ottomans, but rather at the hands of the Afghans. The Safavids had occupied a good portion of Afghanistan and experienced heavy resistance from the Afghan Sunni tribes to their imposition of Shiism. Unlike the Persians, the Afghans refused to convert en masse and revenge seethed under the surface of Safavid control of Afghan dominions. In 1707 a Sunni cleric, Mir Wais, was on his way to the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) when he encountered Sunni Hanafi clerics and Hanbali Sunni clerics. He derived a fatwa endorsed by several Sunni clerics sanctioning the killing of Persian Shiites as heretics. There were objections from Sunni clerics led by Abdel-Kareem al-Sindi in Mecca. In Medina, Mir Wais spent the night inside the mosque under the Prophet Muhammad's tomb; he dreamt of the Prophet handing him a sword, and he took this as a sign that his sacred mission was to demonize Persian Shiites.

In 1709 Mir Wais was back in Afghanistan, and energized a movement that captured Kandahar. Mir Wais died in 1715. His son, Mir Mahmoud, led his father's Afghan army into Persia in 1722 and captured the Safavid capital of Isfahan. Mir Mahmoud invited three hundred Safavid notables to a feast where he massacred all of them along with two hundred of their children. The bloodshed continued when Mir Mahmoud ordered the deaths of three thousand Persian soldiers in retaliation of the regicide of Sultan Hussein. These soldiers had defected to Mir Mahmoud during the siege of Isfahan. Fifteen days of killing followed and mainly targeted functionaries of the Safavid bureaucracy. In 1725 Mir Mahmoud killed the remaining member of the Safavid Dynasty. Mir Mahmoud was considered insane and was himself killed by Afghan tribesmen. The tribesmen elevated Mahmoud's cousin, Ashraf Khan, to the position of leadership.

Hassan Pasha watched these developments from Baghdad and worked with the sultan to shore up Baghdad's defenses by reinforcing walls and trenches and by renovating wells. Hassan Pasha corresponded with Mir Mahmoud, who responded using a hand-delivered note from an ambassador, Mohammad Sadek Khan, that stated that his religious duty was to purify Islam from Shiism. Hassan Pasha and the Afghan emissary conspired to shore up the Afghans in undermining the Safavid Persians. Hassan Pasha lamented the collapse of the Safavids at the hands of the Afghans, and he lobbied clerics in Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) for a fatwa against the *rawafid* (rejectionist; this is an epithet used to describe Shiites, and is still used today by al-Qaida). In 1723 Hassan Pasha's lobbying efforts were successful, and he not only garnered a regular army of Janissaries armed with cannons, but also elicited Iraqi tribal adversaries to join him on a campaign against the dying Safavid Empire and to partake of the spoils of war. The first major Persian city to fall was Karmanshah. Hassan Pasha never lived to see the end of the expedition. He died of natural causes in the autumn of 1723 and was buried in Azamiyah, a suburb of Baghdad, at the Abu Hanifa mosque.

AHMED PASHA, SON OF HASSAN PASHA, THE NEW *VALI* OF BAGHDAD, 1724

Ahmed Pasha was on campaign in Persia leading parts of his father's expedition when word reached him of his father's death and the Ottoman sultan's *firman* appointing him *vali* of Baghdad. Hassan Pasha had been a popular ruler and his death led to tribal rebellion within Iraq; by 1725 a massive confederacy of the Bani Lam, Shammar, and Al'a Shibl had been formed. Ahmed Pasha's first order of business was to restore order in Iraq and deal with this challenge to Ottoman authority, which he successfully suppressed in time to face another challenge from the Afghan tribal leader Ashraf Khan.

Ashraf Khan sent an emissary to Istanbul with a religious opinion endorsed by nineteen Sunni Afghan clerics indicating there can be only one Commander of the Faithful and caliph, and since both the Sunni power centers of the Ottomans in the west and Afghans in the east were carving up a weakened Safavid Persian Empire, each Sunni leader claimed the mantle of caliph and Commander of the Faithful. The Afghan leader claimed lineage from Prophet Muhammad's companion Khalid ibn al-Waleed and believed that he was more

of a legitimate heir to the caliphate than the Ottoman sultan, who was unrelated to Muhammad or any of his companions. The Ottoman clergy countered with a saying attributed to Prophet Muhammad: "If there are two caliphs, turn against one." War was declared.

Ahmed Pasha met the forces of Ashraf Khan between Hamdan and Isfahan on 20 November 1726. Ashraf Khan understood he was no match for Ottoman forces and sent clerics to negotiate. This was a ruse to undermine Ottoman morale by arguing that Sunni should not fight Sunni and that fighters would be answerable to God for this sin. This tactic was first used by Muawiyah ibn Abu Sufyan, founder of the Umayyad Dynasty, against Ali in 658 CE at the Battle of Siffin. In the case of Ahmed Pasha, 12,000 Kurds allied to Ottoman forces refused to fight and fled the field. Ashraf Khan dealt a tactical defeat to the Ottomans, but understood he had to negotiate because he could not hold out strategically in Persia and northern Afghanistan if the Ottomans brought their forces to bear in significant numbers. In 1727 the Afghans and Ottomans declared a truce. Among the gifts given by the Afghans to the sultan was an elephant that had been brought from Afghanistan to Baghdad on its way to Istanbul. Baghdad residents of the time called 1727 "The Year of the Elephant" because it was the first time in memory that any resident had ever seen the large creature. The Ottoman sultan conceded Ashraf Khan as king of Persia, and Ashraf Khan conceded his claim to the caliphate and accepted being a vassal of the Ottoman sultan.

NADIR QALI, THE REEMERGENCE OF THE SAFAVIDS

Safavid Persian Emperor Tahmasap II faced crumbling frontiers in 1731 following battles with the Afghans and Ottomans. He faced Ottoman forces and suffered a crushing military defeat that allowed the Ottomans to gain Armenia and Georgia. From 1729 Nadir Qali had succeeded in routing the Afghans from eastern Persian frontiers and was livid about the shah's losses. Nadir Qali, at the head of a battle-hardened army, replaced Tahmasap II with his infant son, Abbas III, in 1731. Abbas III was named regent, and within twelve years Nadir Qali deposed the regent and crowned himself Nadir Shah. Nadir Shah's first order of business was to throw down a gauntlet at the feet of Ahmed Pasha, the Ottoman *vali* of Baghdad, demanding the right to visit the tombs of the Shiite imams and the return of Persian prisoners. In January 1733 Nadir

Shah took the offensive, crossing the Diyala River and marching for Baghdad. European engineers were with his army and helped construct bridges for the army to cross rivers. Nadir Shah's first siege of Baghdad failed due to the inadequacy of Persian cannons, but his seven-month siege of Baghdad led to the deaths of 100,000 people. Nadir Shah effectively ruled the Safavid Empire until his assassination in 1747. His rule is often associated with a rebirth of the Safavid Empire.

The Ottoman commander was Uthman ("the lame") Pasha. He was a hero to the Ottomans and the archnemesis of Nadir Shah. Nadir Shah mounted campaigns against the Ottomans in Baghdad, as well as Shiite holy cities under Ottoman control. Uthman Pasha and Nadir Shah were two charismatic commanders who led from the saddle, with Nadir Shah losing Baghdad, but not before losing his flag bearer and having a horse killed underneath him. The Persians suffered 30,000 killed and 3,000 prisoners, and Nadir Shah fled back into Persia. He returned to face Uthman Pasha three months later at the head of a larger force, and with a firm belief that the only way to conquer Baghdad was to beat Uthman Pasha. Nadir Shah understood this one charismatic Ottoman field commander was the enemy's center of gravity whose death or capture would most certainly vanquish any Ottoman ambitions in Baghdad. These two warriors engaged in battle near Kirkuk in late 1733. Nadir Shah's hopes were realized: Uthman Pasha was killed during the course of the battle. News of his death spread inside Baghdad and caused a precipitous decline in morale in Ahmed Pasha's camp behind the walls of Baghdad. Despite Nadir Shah's initial success, rampant rumors of a revolt within the Safavid royal family to replace the infant regent he had installed in 1731 prevented him from taking Baghdad as he had planned.

AHMED PASHA AGAINST THE IRAQI TRIBES

Once Nadir Shah and his army redeployed to Persia, Ahmed Pasha used his forces to violently repress the Iraqi tribes that had allied themselves with the Safavid Persians. The Shammar Tribal Confederation received the worst of it for spying on behalf of the Persians. Ahmed Pasha, aside from sending Ottoman forces to deal with the Shammar, allied himself with the Shammar's rival tribes, the Qashim and Zubaid. Ahmed Pasha also dealt with mutinous Janissaries who had lost their nerve during Baghdad's siege. Of note, the Ottoman

vali of Baghdad subjugated the Shammar but allowed them to repledge their fealty to the Ottoman Empire, at which point Ahmed Pasha ceased hostilities. The pasha understood the significance of tribal alliances. He could not implement a policy of total elimination due to intermarriages and the intermingling of the Qashim and Zubaid with the Shammar.

In 1738 Ahmed Pasha faced a serious tribal rebellion known popularly as the Saadoun Revolt, whereby the Muntafiq Confederacy declared its own sultanate in Najaf and Kufa, taking those cities with 10,000 warriors and surrounding Hila. Ahmed Pasha suppressed the confederacy in 1741 by a mixture of bribes, warfare, and changing alliances. Sheikh Saadoun's head was embalmed and sent to the Ottoman sultan as tribute.

NADIR SHAH AND OTTOMAN ACCEPTANCE OF THE SHIITE JAFARI SCHOOL AS ISLAM'S FIFTH SCHOOL

Nadir Shah and his Shiite clerics reasoned that Jafar al-Sadiq lived in the same era of Malik and Abu Hanifa (founders of two of four major schools of Sunni Islam) and could bridge the gap between Sunni and Shiite schools. There are four recognized Sunni schools: Maliki, Hanafi, Hanbali, and Shafei. The Persians argued that Jafar al-Sadiq was not only a scholar of the period, but also a descendant from both Ali, Muhammad's cousin, and Abu Bakr, the Prophet's closest companion. Nadir Shah retook Qandahar and captured Kabul, and stood poised for his greatest conquest, Mogul India under Muhammad Shah. In 1738 he marched into Delhi, having vanquished the Mogul armies, married his son to the Mogul line, and set his sights on bridging the Ottoman Sunni and Persian Shiite divide. He deposed the seated Safavid Shah, and Nadir Qali became Nadir Shah from 1743 to 1747.

In 1743 Nadir Shah sent a message to the Ottoman sultan demanding recognition of the Jafari Shiite School as the fifth *madhhab* (school) of Islam. The Ottoman clergy rejected his request and for the third time Nadir Shah entered Iraq with his army. His attempted siege of Mosul ended in failure, and his frustrated forces headed towards Baghdad but stopped at Kazimiyah, where Nadir Shah sent a note to Ahmed Pasha requesting a truce. This led to the Najaf Clerical Congress, which brought together Sunni and Shiite clerics from the Ottoman and Safavid Empires. During that congress the clerics agreed to the following points:

- The Jafari School was recognized as the fifth school of Islam.
- Shiite public insults of the Prophet's companions, the three caliphs, and Muhammad's wife Aisha would cease.
- Access for Shiites to Mecca and Medina was settled.
- *Wakils* (ambassadors) were exchanged.

In 1745 in Armenia a major war broke out between the Ottomans and the Persians. The Ottoman sultan and Nadir Shah were able to avert further escalation of hostilities over Armenia. A plot was uncovered by Nadir Shah's military commanders to kill all Persians in his army except Uzbeks and Turkomen. In 1747 Nadir Shah was assassinated by the captain of his personal guard, Salah bey, in collusion with military officers who felt that the ruler had become unstable in later years; Salah bey declared Nadir Shah to have been a Safavid pretender. A member of the Safavid royal family was reinstated and the Ottomans lost a Persian ruler with whom they had reached an understanding.

CONCLUSION

The Safavid Empire experienced a decline and only lasted two more decades before ending in 1760 with the puppet regime (controlled by the military commanders around the Safavid shah) of Ismail III. Chaos ensued in Persian domains after the death of Nadir Shah, and the Safavids were exhausted not only by internal strife, but also by constant raids from Afghan tribesmen as well as Ottoman assaults. In 1796 the Turkmen Shepard-Warriors, the Qajars, swept into Persia and established a new Persian dynasty that lasted until 1925. The Qajars never posed a serious threat to Iraq or the Ottomans. New threats to Iraq and the Ottomans came from the Mameluks of Egypt, who pushed from Gaza into the Levant. The Wahhabi emerged from the Najd (literally the uplands, but actually the desert region of central Arabia) armed with a fanatic zeal that threatened southern Iraq starting as early as 1802 with raids and desecrations of Karbala.

Volume 2 of al-Wardi's work covers the history of Iraq from 1831 to 1872. It includes the influence of Egyptian commander and *khedive* (Ottoman viceroy of Egypt) Muhammad Ali Pasha and his son Ismail, and Wahhabi raids, and ends with the Ottoman attempts at imposing conscription on Iraqis

in their attempts to modernize. The tensions between Sunnis and Shiites and the details of their discussions are an invaluable part of al-Wardi's work in that volume. American military planners cannot afford to deploy without first being oriented to this history. It provides a social-political-religious and military look at terrain that American military units are now traversing.

2

IRAQ AND THE REGION (1798–1872)

Foreword by Adm. James Stavridis, U.S. Navy; Commander,
U.S. European Command

Understanding the area of operations and in particular the Middle East requires much reading, discussion, and reflection. For years, Commander Aboul-Enein has made a commitment to bringing Arabic works of military significance to the pages of Army professional journals. The multivolume work of the late Iraqi sociologist Dr. Ali al-Wardi (hereafter al-Wardi) represents six concentrated volumes in eight books that provide a comprehensive look into the complex facets of Iraq from an external and an internal view. Much like the Cold War when Soviet military thought was translated and analyzed, we must make an effort to translate the works of Arab academics, counterterrorism specialists, and military leaders and yes, even the terrorists themselves. A measure of success for any military writer is when their pieces stimulate debate, and are used to train a future generation of leaders. Commander Aboul-Enein's essay on the Muslim Brotherhood published in *Military Review* was used in teaching electives at the Joint Forces Staff College, and his assessment of Bin Laden was used in the Joint Advanced Warfare School. I commend the U.S. Army's *Aarmor* journal for dedicating several issues to highlighting the importance of Dr. al-Wardi's work, offering future and current American military leaders access to this important work published only in Arabic.

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 featured al-Wardi's discussion of the internal and external pressures on Iraq during the struggle between the Persian Safavid and Ottoman Empires from the fourteenth to the late eighteenth centuries. This chapter focuses on the arrival of French forces into Egypt, the heart of the Ottoman Empire, in 1798. This arrival sent a shock through the Islamic world. According to al-Wardi who quotes an Ottoman chronicler of the period, Sultan Selim III did not know of the occupation of Egypt by Napoleon until two months after the invasion had begun. The sultan called for a jihad, but it was ineffective. It took Horatio Nelson's British fleet to evict the French from Egypt in 1801, but not before Napoleon had left an indelible mark on the region during three years of occupation that saw his forces push into Palestine and the Levant. Napoleon's arrival with his army was the first time a Christian force had invaded the heart of the Islamic Ottoman Empire. In the past the Ottomans and other Islamic sultanates had challenged Dutch, British, and French encroachment on the periphery, the Caucuses, India, the Persian Gulf, and the Red Sea, but those incursions had been small and unnoticed by the mass of Muslims. The arrival of Napoleon's 30,000 troops and their easy victory against Mameluk warriors could not be ignored by the Muslim populace or easily hidden from public view by Ottoman authorities. Al-Wardi spends half of Volume 2 discussing events outside Iraq that were followed by Iraqis of the period with interest; Iraq's fate was tied to the fortunes of the Ottoman sultan.

MUHAMMAD ALI PASHA OF EGYPT

From this shock of French arms emerged the Albanian cavalry officer in Ottoman service, Muhammad Ali, who seized on four years of chaos created by the withdrawal of French forces in 1801 to impose order on Egypt and become supreme leader of Egypt. Muhammad Ali would expand his reach from Egypt to Syria, over the Balkans, Arabia, and the Sudan, and would threaten the Ottoman Empire itself. This leader modernized Egypt and in particular Egyptian forces. Born in 1769, the same year as Napoleon, Muhammad Ali viewed the French forces with awe. In 1801 he almost was killed as Anglo-Ottoman forces fought French forces in Abu Qir in Alexandria, and by 1805 he had started what would be forty-three years of rule and extract from the sultan the

concession to be *khedive* and not simply *vali* of Egypt, giving him autonomy and allowing him to pass on the vice regency to his heirs.

Al-Wardi writes that Muhammad Ali was illiterate until the age of forty, but that he had books on Napoleon, Machiavelli, and Ibn Khuldun read to him. Muhammad Ali had had Machiavelli's *The Prince* and his lesser-known *Dell'arte della Guerra* (*The Art of War*) translated into Turkish and read to him every day, ten pages at a time, until he had completed the books. Muhammad Ali was reputed to have dismissed Machiavelli's work as useless, but it is likely he consumed its lessons and, much like the Italian Renaissance leaders and the papacy before him, saw in Machiavelli's work dangerous lessons for those willing to upset the status quo. The recently installed *vali* of Egypt had contempt for his subjects and ruled through European, Turkish, Circassian, Albanian, and Kurdish leaders, commenting that Egyptians were worthy only of manual labor and driving donkeys.

First order of business for Muhammad Ali was the modernization of his forces, transforming the Egyptian system from village levies in which communities provided and equipped forces based on the demands of Mameluk or Ottoman masters to a modern regular standing force. The Egyptian system was a feudal system called *firqa* (group); each *firqa* had a commander. The Egyptians had faced Napoleon's squares of soldiers, cannons, and modern drill tactics with separate commanders fighting as individuals with the support of their *firqa*. Muhammad Ali coveted a Napoleonic style army and in 1819 imported the first of what would be a string of Western military advisers that by the 1870s included former Confederate officers.

Muhammad Ali could not wait for his forces to modernize when he was challenged by the Wahhabis. Sultan Mahmoud II ordered Muhammad Ali to address the rabble that had occupied the holy sites of Mecca and Medina and were attacking pilgrims. The sultan denounced the Wahhabis and the *kharijeen* (meaning those outside Islam) for their brutality and intolerance. In 1811 Egyptian forces landed in Yanbu' al Bahr in Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coast under the command of Muhammad Ali's eldest son Tousson Pasha. The Egyptians easily took Mecca and Medina from the Wahhabis and *kharijeen* and held those cities until the summer of 1812. In that year Wahhabi forces from the interior collected and struck, leading Egyptian forces who had garrisoned themselves in Mecca and Medina to plead for aid from Cairo and from

Muhammad Ali Pasha. Muhammad Ali arrived in Arabia personally with reinforcements and to rally his Egyptian forces: Egyptians needed to be resupplied, and lines of communication needed to be secured from Wahhabi raids.

Egyptian soldiers resented their non-Egyptian overlords, who believed that while the Wahhabis were primitive, they resented that the Muslim call to prayer could not be heard in Egyptian camps, and were disgusted that the non-Egyptian officers in command drank alcohol.

Tousson died in the Wahhabi campaigns, and Muhammad Ali returned to Egypt, determined to annihilate the Wahhabis. He sent his second adopted son, Ibrahim Pasha, who emerged as a brilliant military commander; his first campaign was against the Wahhabis in 1816. First he prayed at the Tomb of Prophet Muhammad in Medina, and then he set out to roll up the Wahhabis through force, French tactics, cannons, and undermining the tribal fabric through bribes and protection that made up the complex tribal alliances of the First Saudi State established in 1744. Ibrahim vowed he would release his slaves and never touch alcohol if God granted him victory against the Wahhabis. After returning to his military camp, he ordered every drop of wine dumped. This may have been done to motivate the foot soldiers, made up of Egyptian and Sudanese peasants, who saw the Ottoman consumption of alcohol as not only against Islamic law, but also as a bad omen before going into battle against the puritanical Wahhabis.

After his arrival in 1816 Ibrahim Pasha fought the Wahhabis, bribed tribes, and offered Ottoman and Egyptian positions in Arabia's interior. In 1818 he finally arrived with his army in the Wahhabi capital of Dir'iyah, leveling the city and capturing the leader of the Sauds Abdul-Aziz ibn Saud alive (not to be confused with the founder of the modern-day Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the same name), who he would send to Istanbul as a gift to Sultan Mahmoud II. Cannon was not only a tactical weapon, but also a psychological one against the Bedouin. This was the first crack of cannon they had ever heard, and it demoralized al-Saud's forces. Iraqis rejoiced at the Egyptian victory against the Wahhabis, as Iraq had suffered from consistent tribal raids and had never forgiven the sacking of Karbala by the Wahhabis in 1802. Ibrahim Pasha held Wahhabi clerics responsible for inciting the tribes, and invited them to four days of religious debate in Dir'iyah, Saudi Arabia, that ended with the execution of all Wahhabi clerics present.

GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (1821 TO 1830)

The Ottomans faced a challenge in 1821 with the yearning for Greek independence and support from Western groups, such as the group known as the Friends of Greece. Among the prominent volunteers of this group was the British poet Lord Byron, who died in the Greek rebellion against the Ottomans. Victor Hugo romanticized the Greek war in his collection of poems, *Les Orientales*. To the Ottomans this war was known as Yunani Isyani (Greek Insurrection). The Ottoman sultan ordered the *vali* of Damascus to conduct a massacre of Syrian Orthodox Church members, an order the *vali* avoided by referring the matter to consultation and deriving an opinion that there were no rebels among the Christians in Syria. The sultan's order was a reaction to the massacres conducted against Muslims in Greece and Macedonia. In 1824 Ottoman sultan Mahmoud II, stuck in a quagmire in Greece, called for help from Muhammad Ali Pasha in Egypt, who sent a fleet within months that held 17,000 troops under the command of Ibrahim Pasha. Upon landing in the Peloponnese, Ibrahim linked with Ottoman forces and rallied them to victory upon victory until they arrived and occupied Athens in 1827, setting up camp on the Acropolis. The combined Egyptian-Ottoman victory was on the verge of suppressing Greek resistance when a combined British, French, and Russian fleet destroyed the Egyptian fleet in the Battle of Navarino. Ibrahim consolidated his forces and returned to Egypt, leaving the Ottomans to subsequently withdraw from Greece.

MUHAMMAD ALI DEMANDS COMPENSATION

Muhammad Ali, to make up for his losses, demanded that the sultan grant him the governorship of the Levant for his services against the Wahhabis in Arabia, and against the Greeks. His demands were dismissed, and Muhammad Ali sought to seize the Levant by force. He dispatched Ibrahim Pasha once more with an army that traveled through Gaza and towards Acre. It was Acre, and in particular the citadel, that had frustrated Napoleon. This was not lost on Ibrahim, who laid a six-month siege bombarding the city walls and citadel. On one day alone three thousand grenades and 10,000 cannonballs rained on the city. Finally a breach was achieved and a three-pronged assault ensued, leading to the surrender in 1832 of the *vali* of the Levant, Abdullah Pasha. Ibrahim Pasha's father, Muhammad Ali, must have been pleased with

his son whose mother, a Greek, had married Muhammad Ali, at which time he adopted Ibrahim as his own. A century after the fall of Acre in 1932 one of Cairo's main streets and city centers was renamed Ibrahim Pasha; his statue astride a horse, unveiled in 1873, still remains there. The taking of Acre demoralized Ottoman forces, which were no match for the tactics of Ibrahim and his use of European methods of warfare. In 1833 the Ottoman sultan capitulated, granting him the title *khedive* of Egypt, a hereditary title, and *vali* of the Levant, a nonhereditary title.

Ibrahim Pasha took the governorship of the Levant, and set about using Arab identity to rule. He named himself Siraskar al-Jaysh al-Arabi (commander of the Arab armies), and delivered speeches in which he declared, "I arrived in Egypt a boy, and my blood was shaded, and my soul was given an Arab coloring." But Ibrahim's popularity was eroded by taxes that were three times higher than taxes under the Ottoman authorities. These taxes were used partly to modernize the Levant; however, much of this revenue, as Muhammad Ali had done, was to modernize Egyptian and Syrian arms. One chief complaint of the people of the Levant was forced conscriptions into the military that Ibrahim had imposed, coupled with the disarming of the local population. On the issue of those evading the military draft, reports surfaced of people seeking asylum in foreign consulates, retreating into the hills and mountains, and even throwing themselves into the Mediterranean Sea as Egyptian soldiers attempted to apprehend them. Muhammad Ali faced similar problems of Egyptians engaging in self-mutilation to avoid conscription; it was deemed by the Egyptian viceroy that Egyptians as farmers were more valuable than Egyptians serving as soldiers, so he acquired Sudanese slaves as conscripts to serve in his army.

Ibrahim Pasha would find problems in suppressing the autonomy of Palestinian families beginning with Abu Ghoush of Jerusalem; the rebellion would grow to include the Nablus families of Toukan and Jazar, who rejected conscription and taxation. In 1833 these families charged Ibrahim Pasha with being a drunkard and eating the flesh of pigs, and claimed he did not pray inside the mosques. It is estimated Ibrahim Pasha lost four thousand troops in the suppression of these Palestinian families in an Egyptian scorched-earth policy. In 1836 Ibrahim diverted his attention to subjugating the Druze. The problem was an invitation sent by Sherief Pasha, Ottoman overseer of Damascus: When Yahya Hamdan, the leader of the Druze, arrived in Damascus,

the Ottoman *vali* requested 170 Druze youths for military conscription. The Druze leader said he could not fulfill this request as every able-bodied Druze male was needed to deter Bedouin incursions. In response the Ottoman *vali* slapped him, thereby initiating a revolution by this assault on the dignity of Sheikh Yahya that cost Ibrahim Pasha 10,000 casualties and mired him in a ten-month rebellion.

In 1839 the Ottoman sultan believed himself to be strong enough to challenge Muhammad Ali and sent an army to challenge his authority in the Levant. The Ottoman and Egyptian armies met north of Halab near the Syrian-Turkish border. The Egyptians were commanded by Joseph Anthelme Sève, who had been an officer under Napoleon and who trained Egyptian forces. Sève had converted to Islam, taking the name Suleiman Pasha al-Fransi (the Frenchman). The Ottomans were commanded by Helmuth von Moltke (the Elder). Little is related about the details of the battle in al-Wardi's book, except for a description of Ottoman Hafiz Pasha refusing to alter his plans despite Moltke's advice, and of the Egyptians fighting a fluid campaign, crushing the Ottomans in what would be called the Battle of Nizip.

The power of Muhammad Ali was challenged by the Europeans that led him to withdraw from the Levant in 1840. Muhammad Ali's health began to decline in 1846. His son Ibrahim became regent in 1848 but died later that year. His father, Muhammad Ali, died in Alexandria, Egypt in August 1849 and was succeeded by Abbas (1848–1863) and then Sayyid (1854–1863), who started the Suez Canal project that would be completed in 1869 under Ismail Pasha (1863–1879). Port Sa'id, the Suez Canal city, is named after Sa'id Pasha. The Muhammad Ali Dynasty would continue until the removal of King Farouk I from power in 1952 and the declaration of Egypt as a republic.

ALI RIDA PASHA: REASSERTION OF OTTOMAN RULE OVER IRAQ

In the first volume, al-Wardi introduces us to strong Ottoman *valis* of Baghdad like Ahmed Pasha. He argues that weak pashas were appointed then became overwhelmed with internal tribal dissent and external incursions from the Wahhabis in the south and Egyptian Mameluks of the Levant from the west. The Mameluks forcibly took over Baghdad, and the Ottoman sultan conceded to their authority until 1831. This concession was temporary, however, until the Ottoman sultan found a commander and army strong enough

to regain this territory. This commander was Ali Rida Pasha, a Bektashi Sufi from Tarbzon, a city on the Black Sea. He was good as a general but incapable of handling the pestilence, disease, and Euphrates River flooding Baghdad. A drunkard, Ali Rida Pasha left power in the hands of three ruthless brigands in Baghdad: Ali Agha Sirji, Abdel-Kader Mosuli, and Ali al-Khasi. These three criminal warlords used extortion, assassination, murder, intimidation, rape, racketeering, and crime to rule Baghdad and its environs. As long as these gangsters paid tribute to Ali Rida Pasha and subjugated themselves to Ottoman authority they were given a free hand in Baghdad and most of Iraq.

The torture of a protected woman and the violation of her honor led to the Jameel Zadah rebellion. In 1832 a mufti (cleric) protected a woman from the violent advances of criminals. The woman was violated in the house of this cleric, and the protest turned violent, leading to cannons being turned on the protestors and causing a massive fire in the Baghdad marketplace. This led to the Jameel Zadah rebellion in Baghdad in which a jihad was declared against the organized crime that ran rampant in the city under Ali Rida Pasha. Another challenge came the same year when the Shammar tribe threatened Baghdad. Ali Rida Pasha used the Shammar's nemesis, the Anayzah tribe, to fight the Shammar, promising the Anayzah a reward that never came. As a result, the Ottoman Vali Ali Rida Pasha turned and allied himself with the Shammar against the Anayzah, all in an effort to remain in power in Baghdad. Under Ali Rida Pasha the Shiites of Iraq were allowed to commemorate Ashoura. Ali Rida Pasha, to placate the Shiites in Baghdad and southern Iraq, allowed the practice of Ashoura, which is the commemoration of the martyrdom of Hussein in Baghdad, Basra, Najaf, and Iraq's major cities. Overall, the stewardship of Ali Rida Pasha, which ended in 1842, was disastrous for Baghdad and in fact for all of Iraq. It left organized criminals in charge of most of Iraq, and ushered in a period of lawlessness in the region.

NEGUIB PASHA

In 1842 Neguib Pasha took over as *vali* of Baghdad; he was sent by the Ottomans from Constantinople to reform Iraq from the excesses of Ali Rida Pasha. His tenure was marked by competition between Britain and France over the good graces of Ottoman officials. Neguib was pro-British and visited the British consul immediately after arriving in Baghdad, which offended the French.

This led to the deterioration of relations between the French and Neguib Pasha. This deterioration included incidents such as four European women being accosted for being in public with an unrelated male, their Iraqi servant.

Neguib Pasha is better known for the 1842 massacre in Karbala that almost started a war between the Persian Qajar Dynasty and the Ottoman sultan at a time when the Ottomans were being challenged by European powers, including Britain and France. At that time Karbala had evolved into a city where every criminal, brigand, smuggler, and escapee from Ottoman authority convened. The city became a no-go zone for Ottoman forces, and Neguib Pasha resolved to address this criminal autonomous region. Neguib Pasha sent a notice that the criminal oligarchs of Karbala led by Ibrahim al-Zafarani were to disarm within the month. This order was ignored, and Neguib laid siege to Karbala, and began bombarding it with artillery. Neguib had explained what he was doing to British and French consuls as well as to the Persian ambassador. In 1846 an Ottoman war ship appeared near Basra, which led to Persian diplomatic protests. Neguib Pasha's tenure also was marked by several charismatic religious movements and significant events in Iraq:

- The arrival of Muhammad Ali (also known as the Bab, or portal to God) al-Shirazi, who was believed by some to be the twelfth imam returned to Earth. The Bab was executed by Qajar Persian officials in the city of Tabriz. This movement of Muhammad Ali evolved into the Baha'is, whose main center and temple is located in Haifa, Israel.
- A cholera epidemic in Baghdad.
- Struggles for power between the Ottoman *vali* and the mufti of Baghdad, Sheikh al-Alusi.
- Intrigues by the French consul.
- The charismatic woman Qurat Ayn (1814–1852), a striking blonde who advocated and preached the arrival of the Bab. Both the Bab and Qurat Ayn advocated the views of Shiite cleric Ahmed al-Ihsaai (1753–1826), concepts such as the fourteen infallible ones (Muhammad, Fatima, and the twelve imams). Qurat Ayn was executed in 1852 by the Qajar Shah for heresy and for not renouncing the Bab as the awaited imam.

CONCLUSION

Al-Wardi's second volume goes on to delve into a series of Ottoman governors of Baghdad after the tenure of Neguib Pasha in 1849. They were unremarkable except for Rashid Pasha (1852–1857), who collected funds and taxes for the Crimean War from 1854 to 1856, in which the Ottomans sided with the British and French against the Russians. The British Royal Navy sent two warships in the Shatt al-Arab waterway to dissuade Persians from taking advantage of their Ottoman ally, Omar Pasha (1858–1860), who with Ottoman forces faced down a posturing of 20,000 Persian troops along the border. This was the first serious threat by the Persians since the end of the Safavid Dynasty in 1760. Finally, Midhat Pasha (1869–1872), who renewed conscription and faced tribal rebellions of the Shammar, began converting tribal leaders into bureaucrats. This worked to pacify subclans such as the Saadoun, but not all clans abandoned their hatred of central authority. Midhat Pasha organized a military expedition of 4,000 regulars and 1,500 tribal irregulars aboard eighty ships with cannons. This expedition left Kuwait to rid the Persian Gulf coastal region of al-Hasa of the Wahhabis of Ibn Saud. He succeeded in forty days and appointed an Ottoman *mutasarrıf* (overseer, or designee of the Ottoman *vali*) in al-Hasa. Today that region is the oil-producing area of Saudi Arabia.

Midhat Pasha, in a sign of Sunni-Shia diplomacy, hosted Nasr-al-Din Shah of the Persian Qajar Dynasty on his visit to the Shiite holy cities of Iraq. It was the first time an Ottoman official had hosted a Persian ruler for the purpose of facilitating his pilgrimage to Shiite sites. The next chapter will discuss Volume 3 of al-Wardi's seminal work that takes readers into the events of Iraq and the wider Middle East, Persia, and Ottoman Empire from 1865 to 1914. Al-Wardi's work must be translated, analyzed, and taught to future American military leaders deploying to the Middle East.

3

IRAQ AND THE REGION (1865–1914)

Foreword by Mr. Gary Greco, Chief, Office of Intelligence Operations,
Joint Intelligence Task Force for Combating Terrorism (JITF-CT)

I am pleased to introduce the third chapter of this exposé. The eight-volume work by Iraqi sociologist Ali al-Wardi is a definitive history of modern Iraq from the arrival of the Ottomans in the sixteenth century to the creation of the modern Iraqi state after World War I. This third volume covers four decades of Iraq's history from 1865 to 1914, a time when modern conveniences such as telegraph, steam riverboats, postal service, the printing press, and modern schools were introduced to Iraq by the Ottomans and the British Indian Viceroy. With these changes came ideas such as Arab nationalist movements, political changes, constitutionalism, the rise of bureaucrats, and the subjugation of tribes using the telegraph to move Ottoman forces rapidly to areas that required pacification. Al-Wardi's work is known among experienced Middle East foreign area officers who are proficient in reading the Arabic language. I have had the pleasure of discussing these volumes not only with Commander Aboul-Enein, but also with Brig. Gen. H. R. McMaster, and Special Operations field commanders deployed to Iraq. Commander Aboul-Enein has done a great service by highlighting al-Wardi's work, which ranks among those Arabic books of military significance. I would like to commend *Armor* for providing a forum helping U.S. forces understand the nuances and complexities of Iraq. The al-Wardi book is not only known by our

experienced Middle East Foreign Area officers, but also known by our adversaries who utilize aspects of al-Wardi's history to stoke old sectarian grievances in the twenty-first century, using fragments of Iraqi history taken out of context. We must not be blind to the existence of Arabic works, and we must study them with the same tenacity we examined Russian materials during the Cold War.

INTRODUCTION

The first two volumes of Ali al-Wardi's *Social Glimpses of Iraqi Modern History* took readers from the arrival of the Ottomans in the sixteenth century to the start of the industrial age. Volume 3, the subject of this chapter, takes readers from the industrial age to the outbreak of World War I. The years from 1865 to 1914 represent a crucial period of change for Iraq as it became exposed to new social, political, and technological ideas. These changes were stimulated by the printing press, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the steam engine, the postal service, and the telegraph. These breakthroughs, in particular those in the realm of communication, caused Iraqi society to become less isolated. The Ottoman *vali* of Baghdad, Midhat Pasha, also introduced hospitals, schools, newspapers, tramway (public transportation), and paved roads during this period.

These new projects would have an economic and intellectual impact on Iraq. Agricultural subsistence farms to feed the people were replaced with large plantations designed to grow Iraqi products, such as dates, for export. Industrial farming saw the introduction of rice processors, wheat harvesters, and motorized water pumps. Dozens of villages and hamlets grew into towns, and new towns were created such as Amara in 1861, Aziziyah in 1865, Ramadi in 1870, and Nasiriyah in 1870.

Another result of these changes was the rise of the *effendi* or *effendiah* class (the lowest title of honor given to Ottoman bureaucrats, junior officers, and clerics; bureaucrats), who were Arabs that had graduated from modern Ottoman schools. Some of these bureaucrats became Francophiles or Anglophiles, or insisted on speaking Turkish among the Arabs. They viewed tribes and farmers with disdain. These bureaucrats were masters at easing or throwing obstacles at the people's business to give them a sense of importance as well

as to extract bribes from the common people. The *effendiah* were educated along Western bureaucratic models and then were placed in a sea of tradition, superstition, and tribalism. They spoke in terms of reform, oxygen, microbes, and evolution, terms utterly alien to Iraqis of the mid-nineteenth century.

EGYPT'S PRINTING PRESS SHAKES IRAQ

A mid-nineteenth-century renaissance blossomed in Egypt with the arrival of the printing press. Many intellectuals fled the oppressive atmosphere of Syria under the Ottomans and found a new intellectual awakening in the British protectorate of Egypt. European revolutionary ideas of nationalism, the ideals of the French Revolution, and sciences were translated into Arabic and mass printed in Egypt. Magazines, books, and scholarly papers arrived by packet boat or steamer up the Tigris River to Baghdad in the 1870s. The first to feel the threat of these new ideas of nationalism, secularism, and Darwinism were the Shiite, Sunni, Jewish, and Christian clergy of Iraq. Noman Alusi, a Sunni cleric and Baghdad native who led the Islamic Reform Movement in Iraq, had been inspired by the Egyptian modernist reform cleric Muhammad Abduh, who died in 1905. Darwinism was advocated by another Baghdad native Shibl Shameil; he was joined by the Shiite cleric Haba al-Deen Sharistani, who also taught Newtonian physics. Some Sunni clerics like Sheikh Zahdawi abandoned their clerical robes and joined the *effendiah* class of bureaucrats to continue their modernist education.

1877 RUSSO-TURKISH WAR

The Ottoman sultan who reigned during most of this period was Abdul-Hamid II. He took the throne in 1870 and remained there for thirty-two years. In 1877 the Russo-Turkish War broke out. The sultan appealed to the clergy to issue a fatwa sanctioning all Muslims to fight and to add the title *ghazi* (conqueror) to his title, making the declaration in the mosques of the empire. The Ottoman sultan and his religious advisers attempted to link the title *ghazi* to the Prophet Muhammad's saying, "He who prepares a *ghazi* [raid] in God's path has already triumphed."

Ottoman ground forces lost to the Russians in the Caucuses and Balkans. The Russo-Turkish War was the first Ottoman conflict in which the sultan

had a telegraph link to the front and so communicated directly with his field commanders. This technology only worsened matters: it eroded military initiative as commanders waited for word from Istanbul. Russian forces made their way to Istanbul, but were pushed back by French and British naval forces aiding the Ottomans. The Russo-Turkish War and the subsequent Treaty of San Stefano (1878) would be a preview of the Treaty of Versailles (1919) and the carving up of Ottoman dominions after World War I. The Treaty of San Stefano gave Bulgaria its independence and gave Armenia and the Port of Batumi to Russia; the Berlin Conference (1884) granted Britain the island of Cyprus, a strategic prize in the eastern Mediterranean.

In 1882, with mounting debts being racked up by the Egyptian *khedive*, the British converted fiscal administration of Egypt to an outright protectorate of the British Empire. Under these conditions, the Ottoman sultan revived the Islamist trend, citing that the British and Russians were the same infidel, and began a systematic intellectual isolation from Western Europe. In 1878 the sultan abrogated the constitution and disbanded the *majlis* (parliament). Abdul-Hamid, though hard working, spent most of his efforts rooting out conspiracies; he is reputed to have had 20,000 spies in Istanbul alone to uncover assassination plots and constitutionalists who were bent on eroding his authority. Censorship was rampant, mail was tampered with, and the printing press was limited. If three persons convened in a coffeehouse, they were immediately suspected of sedition.

SULTAN ABDUL-HAMID II PLAYS THE ISLAMIST CARD

Another event that characterized Sultan Abdul-Hamid II's (hereafter referred to as Abdul-Hamid) reign was the Armenian massacres that started in 1894. These massacres led to Armenian resistance who struck in 1896 seizing hostages in Istanbul's Ottoman Bank. The retaliation would be three days of massacres that galvanized Europe. This further caused Abdul-Hamid to retreat into Islamist politics under the theme, "Muslims of the world, unite!" He hoped to stoke Muslim uprisings in French and British possessions in Africa, India, as well as in Russia and parts of Eastern Europe. Abdul-Hamid spoke in terms of leading a jihad against these crusaders, a term Sultan Abdul Hamid referred to as European powers exploiting Ottoman weakness. Abdul-Hamid

invested heavily in the propagation of Sufism. He printed Qurans and opened religious schools. In Istanbul alone 40,000 students attended religious schools in one academic year. In 1886 he orchestrated an Islamist public relations campaign distributing hairs of the Prophet Muhammad that were kept in the Topkapi Palace. Iraq received five hairs distributed to the Sunni mosques of Abu Hanifah, Kilani, Kazimiyah, and the Shiite mosques of Karbala and Najaf. This distribution was designed to bind the Iraqi people to the Ottoman Empire; the last Friday of Ramadan was set aside in Iraq to bring the relic out every year. The event also was designed to energize Islamist feelings and incite it against the enemies of the empire.

Other projects to bind Ottoman subjects together in the Arab dominions was the Damascus to Medina railway, which comprised nine hundred miles of track that had logistical, communications, trade, and military applications. It was built almost exclusively through personal donations and marketed as a project for Muslim unity to bring Muslims closer to the holy sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina. The line was completed in 1908.

Sultan Abdul-Hamid saw European civilization as poisoned and had special hatred for the British. He saw the West as swallowing Muslim lands piece by piece and undermining his caliphate. While he had distaste for Europe, Abdul-Hamid seemed to favor Germany for military training. When Kaiser Wilhelm II ascended the throne in 1889, he announced his friendship towards the Ottomans as a means of undermining their common enemies, Britain and France. In 1898 the kaiser and his wife visited Abdul-Hamid in Istanbul; this was the first official visit of a European monarch to the Ottoman Empire. When the kaiser visited Jerusalem, he wore Arab dress, and used propaganda to shape himself as a friend of Islam to undermine the British, French, and Russians. He declared that 300 million Muslims could rest assured that they had a friend in Germany. The German monarch laid a wreath at the tomb of Saladin and left a gift of a large silver set of worry beads, which are a symbol of remembrance to God. The German propaganda machine compared the friendship between the kaiser and Abdul-Hamid to that between Holy Roman Emperor Charlemagne and Abbasid Sultan Haroon al-Rashid, who conducted a long diplomatic correspondence in the late eighth century CE. The Ottoman press followed the kaiser's travels; some believed he had

embraced Islam and called him Hajj Abdullah William. (Hajj is a title given to Muslims who have made the hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca.)

This closeness between Germany and the Ottoman Empire worried France, Russia, and Britain. Some of these concerns can be seen in the debates of the British Parliament under the ministry of Prime Minister Lord Salisbury. The British countered by extending support to ethnic, constitutional, and nationalist movements in Egypt, the Levant, and Iraq. When this stimulation by the British of local Arab national movements was started, however, the Ottoman sultan was in the apex of his popularity in Iraq, and was known as Protector and Commander of the Faithful. Al-Wardi describes how Iraqi parents would start a story to their children saying, "Once upon a time, and God grant victory to the sultan, faith, and nation" (*deen wal dawla*). Abdul-Hamid wrapped together the fate of Islam with the fate of the empire and of his reign. In 1893 he ordered his *vali* Hassan Pasha to select five representatives to become wandering clerics who would travel throughout Iraq, preaching, adjudicating disputes, and further binding the Iraqis to the state and their religion. Prayers to Abdul-Hamid were offered in mosques, with emphasis on Quranic verses commanding obeisance to God, the Prophet, and those in charge of Muslim affairs.

FIRST ELECTIONS AND TRIBAL REVOLT

In 1877, under Ottoman *vali* of Baghdad Abdel Rahman Pasha, Iraq held its first election to select representatives to send to Istanbul's newly created Majlis al-Mabutheen (chamber of empire designees). Three representatives from Baghdad would look after and articulate the interests of Iraq before Abdul-Hamid, his ministers, and the Ottoman central bureaucracy. Regrettably, they spent only one month in the position before Abdul-Hamid abrogated the new Ottoman constitution. From 1879 to 1880 a great tribal revolt occurred in Iraq that was led by Mansur (Pasha) al-Sadoun. The so-called Sadoun Revolt declared itself an independent emirate stretching from the outskirts of Baghdad to Basra. Ten thousand tribal forces under al-Sadoun were suppressed by two thousand Ottoman regulars equipped with field artillery under command of Ottoman general Taqi al-Deen Pasha. Of note, the tribal forces used donkeys to kick up sand in the battlefield and mask their deployment. They also

used these pack animals by stuffing their ears with cotton then forcing them to march towards the cannons to receive the first fire. Before the enemy could reload, the tribes marched against the Ottomans. These tactics, although interesting, were useless against the disciplined and German-trained Ottoman forces. In 1881 the Sadoun tribal emirate was suppressed.

In 1889 a Jewish pogrom occurred in Iraq when the Chief Rabbi Abdullah Shumaikh died of cholera and the Jewish community received permission to bury the rabbi near Prophet Ezra's Tomb located sixty miles north of Basra. The population in the village of al-Uzair where the tomb resides refused to allow the burial; the villagers were supported in that refusal by the Ottoman captain of the garrison. Violence broke out, leading to the earliest Jewish pogrom in Iraq.

Namiq Pasha (the Younger), *vali* of Baghdad, reintroduced the reforms of the previous *vali* Midhat Pasha:

- Girls' schools
- Technical school
- First music school
- Hospitals equipped with imported European medicines and equipment
- A carriage factory
- Government buildings, some of which are in use to this day

The first major bridge over the Euphrates River was built in anticipation of the 1870 visit of the Persian shah to Baghdad; this led to a series of bridges built over the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers, the last of which was built in 1902.

CHAOS IN BASRA

Two of the incessant problems of Ottoman governors were pacifying tribes and dealing with breakdowns in urban civil authority. Another problem of this period was piracy in the Shatt al-Arab waterway and in the marsh estuary at the mouth of the Euphrates in southern Iraq. Pirates used escape routes to Persia to evade Ottoman authority. Some of these brigands formed a tribal confederation and developed an autonomous emirate led by Sheikh Khazzal,

known as the emir of Muhammara. The Ottomans used force, but also combined force with creating wedges between tribes to undermine confederacies by offering a combination of positions, bribes, and threats. An example of this technique was that used by Sayed Taib bin Saeed, a Robin Hood figure in Iraq, with whom the Ottomans fought and then offered amnesty, making him *mutasaraf* of al-Hasa in Eastern Arabia. Accused of embezzlement, Taib bin Saeed was removed from office but did not return to southern Iraq. Instead, he was given a posting on the consultative council in Istanbul, representing the Basra area.

The lawlessness in Basra was not brought under control until the former Ottoman commander in chief of Iraq Fakhri Pasha was made *vali* of Baghdad. He used a strategy of disaggregation in order to bring control. Using infantry regiments supported by artillery batteries, he attacked the pirates' enclaves on the Iraqi side of the Shatt al-Arab. This led to a diffusion of the pirates, with some retreating into Persia and others seeking asylum with the emir of Muhammara. Fakhri Pasha used flattery and politely but sternly demanded a return of the brigands and thieves from the emir of Muhammara, adding that it would please him as *vali* of Baghdad and also would please Abdul-Hamid. The emir, feeling a sense of importance, credibility, and recognition from the Ottomans, was faced with a dilemma of whether to please Abdul-Hamid and be rewarded or betray pirates who had supplied him with spoils. In the end, he betrayed the pirates and turned them over. Fakhri Pasha executed pirates, murderers, and rapists, placing their bodies in rice sacks and throwing them into the river. He used a combination of fear, negotiation, flattery, force, and a kaleidoscope of emotions to pacify Basra. (Basra was a major city in the northern Persian Gulf, with a sizeable Shiite presence, along with tribal groupings based on sectarian lines, coupled with tribal raids from north Arabia.) Fakhri's inspiration was not only modern European tactics, but also historical figures from Iraq's past, such as Ziyad ibn Muawiyah ibn Abu Sufyan in 664 CE. Ziyad was one of the sons of Muawiyah founder of the Ummayyad dynasty. In the seventh century Ziyad found Basra in a state of chaos and said to an innocent man facing execution, "I testify you are innocent, but your death benefits the community." It was a Hobbesian view that characterized rule in Iraq from 664 to the 740s with the rise of the Abbasids.

THE RISE OF ABDUL-AZIZ IBN SAUD, THE FOUNDER OF MODERN SAUDI ARABIA

Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud in the late nineteenth century was spending his exile in his ancestral homeland of the Najd in what is now Kuwait City. The Machiavellian emir of Kuwait, Mubarak al-Sabah, offered asylum to the Saudis in the hopes he could use them as proxies in destabilizing central Arabia's Najd tribal confederacies, the strongest one being the Rashids who had evicted the Saudis in the late nineteenth century. In 1902 Abdul-Aziz departed Kuwait with several dozen fighters and began a three-decade effort, first recapturing his ancestral capital Riyadh and then proceeding to craft what would become the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The early phase of this conflict saw the Ibn Sauds versus the Ibn Rashids.

In 1904 the Ottomans backed the Ibn Rashids against the Ibn Sauds in an ancient game of tribal balance of power. The southern Iraqi city of Samawah was transformed into an Ottoman military logistics base. Four Ottoman infantry regiments and desert mobile field artillery commanded by Gen. Shukri Pasha fought with the Ibn Rashids against Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud, who now was supported by fanatical ultra-Wahhabi shock troops known as the *Ikhwan* (Brothers in Belief). They fought in what are now the eastern provinces of Saudi Arabia around the region of al-Qassim. Shukri Pasha was killed in the military engagements and the Ottomans had to reacquaint themselves with desert guerilla tactics, as they had modernized their forces along European lines to fight conventional forces. Ibn Saud's forces defeated Ibn Rashid and Ottoman forces, with thousands of decimated and emaciated forces trickling into Basra after days of wandering in the desert. The Ottomans responded to this challenge by sending two military expeditions: one into Qassim along the Persian Gulf coast, the other into the Hijaz along the Red Sea coast. Field Marshal Ahmed Faydi Pasha commanded eight infantry battalions reinforced by two artillery batteries. They left Najaf in late 1904. Upon learning of this force Ibn Saud abandoned Qassim to avoid a direct confrontation with this modern Ottoman force. After remaining in Qassim less than a year, Istanbul ordered Faydi Pasha and his military expedition to Yemen, and to transfer Qassim to a deputy, so he could focus his attention on suppressing rebellions against Ottoman authority in Yemen. In 1906 Ibn Saud saw the Ottomans

garrisoned in Qassim, with the bulk of their forces in Yemen and the Hijaz (the region encompassing most of the Red Sea coast and including the holy cities of Mecca and Medina). The Ottomans so occupied in western Arabia were not providing forces to support the Ibn Rashids against Ibn Saud. In 1905 Ibn Saud led a contingent to capture Riyadh and sought battle with his Ibn Rashid archenemy. In this engagement the Ibn Rashid chieftain was killed, and a major center of gravity wrapped up in the charisma of the tribal chief led to the collapse of the Ibn Rashids, laying open the Ibn Sauds to become the undisputed leaders of Najd. Ibn Saud immediately sought to negotiate with the Ottomans. The deal struck between the Ottomans and Ibn Saud was recognition of Abdul Aziz as Ottoman vassal of Ha'il, Qassim, and Riyadh—a swath of Arabia extending from the center of the peninsula eastward to the Persian Gulf coast near present-day Dhahran. In return, Ottoman forces located in Qassim evacuated unmolested to the garrisons of Medina and Iraq. Ibn Saud provided the camels and guides for this evacuation of Ottoman troops. Eventually Ibn Saud would give himself the title sultan of Najd and dependencies, then sultan of Najd and the Hijaz and dependencies in 1925, and in 1932 king of Saudi Arabia.

In Baghdad, the *vali* of Baghdad from 1904 to 1905 was Abdul-Wahab al-Albani Pasha. It was at this time that the Sunni cleric Mahmoud Shukri al-Alusi was exiled from Iraq to Turkey for proselytizing Wahhabism. Abdul-Hamid and his *valis* were Sufis who considered the Wahhabis a heretical cult that would destabilize Iraq's sects. His replacement was Abdul-Mejid Bey from 1905 to 1906, whose rule would see the massacre of Persian pilgrims visiting Karbala.

MIRZA SHIRAZI AND THE INFLUENCE OF A GRAND AYATOLLAH

Mirza Mohammad Hassan al-Shirazi would become a highly influential cleric during the reign of Ottoman sultan Abdul-Hamid. Al-Wardi does a marvelous job explaining the clerical debates that characterized the Shiite hierarchy. Chief among the differences between Shiites were the Usuli and Akhbari views: The Akhbaris depended on the *akhbar* (reports) of Prophet Muhammad and the twelve imams. The Usulis (reasoners) argued that these reports were of varying degrees of authenticity, and therefore only someone immersed full-time in

the study of these reports could guide a Shiite to its true application. Akhbaris believe that the reports and the Quran contain all that is needed for the individual to lead a moral life without dependence on the clergy. In addition, the Akhbaris believe that the individual can interpret these texts without taking the clerics' opinion as the final word. One slogan popular in Shiism was that Akhbaris depended on *na'ql* (imitation) and Usulis on *a'ql* (rational analysis).

By 1821 relations with Persia and the Ottomans had improved, and Najaf resumed its historical importance as the center of Shiite debate. Among the differences between Sunni and Shiite clergy is that the Sunnis were government employees whose salaries came from the Ottoman bureaucracy, whereas the Shiite clergy depended on the tithe of their flock. As a result, Shiite clergy feel the economic privations of their flock and tend to advocate for their quality of life, as this has a direct correlation on religious donations and taxes. Sunnis and Shiites view central government authority differently: for the Sunnis, the sultan is the Commander of the Faithful, but for the Shiites he is not. If Shiites accepted the Ottoman sultan as Commander of the Faithful he would be deputy to the twelfth imam, which is an impossibility for a Sunni and leader who is unconnected to Prophet Muhammad's family. The Shiite concept of the imamate combines religious rule with leadership wrapped in a person related to Prophet Muhammad through Ali and Fatima. The Sunni caliphate is a political tradition of tribes selecting the most acceptable candidate through consensus; the leader must govern with the notion of *shura* (consultation) with clergy, tribal chiefs, and *ahl al hal wal aqd* (those leaders who loosen and bind the society to the caliph).

Mirza Shirazi was born in 1815 and educated in Isfahan. In 1843 he began his formal education in Najaf, where he remained to minister to Shiites in Iraq. By 1864 he had become one of four *marjas* (Grand Ayatollahs) of the Najaf Hawza (clerical center) after the death of Marja Ansari who led the Najaf center of Shiism for many years. Failing to achieve the highest office of the Najaf clerical cluster, he emigrated from Najaf to Samarra, a city of significance to both Iraq's Shiites and Sunnis. In that city Shirazi was locked in an ideological competition for converts with Sunni cleric Sheikh Muhammad Saeed al-Naqshabandi. The Ottoman sultan saw in the likes of Shirazi the problems with attempting to unify all of the empire's Muslim subjects around the person of the sultan as caliph.

What would elevate Shirazi's stature was the 1891 Tobacco Protest, an incident that redefined Persia's national identity and led to the downfall of the Qajar Persian shahs. The Qajar Persian Shah Nasr al-Din granted a British firm, the Imperial Tobacco Company of London, the entire tobacco concession from growing to packaging for £15,000 and 25 percent of the annual profits. Persians wrote to Marja (Grand Ayatollah) Shirazi, asking him to intervene with the shah. Shirazi communicated with the Qajar Persian consul in Baghdad. After failing to convince the Qajar Shah of the unpopularity and injustice of the concession to British firms, Shirazi issued a fatwa forbidding the use of Tanbak tobacco, the brand processed by British firms. Amazingly, Persian and Iraqi Shiites within their communities left opium addicts alone, looked the other way when alcohol was sold or consumed, but enforced the Tanbak ban. The fatwa of Shirazi was printed and distributed. It is estimated that 100,000 fatwa pamphlets were distributed from Najaf to Persia. Mosques in Persia read the fatwa and expected followers to heed its warnings. A backlash of the fatwa was the start of threats to westerners in Persia: many fled Teheran and others retreated into their diplomatic missions. Rumors of a jihad fatwa were circulated, a rumor that had to be dispelled by Ayatollah Muhammad Hassan al-Ashtyani. As a token of thanks to Ashtyani, the Shah Nasr al-Din offered him a diamond ring. The cleric refused to accept the gift, however, until the shah had cancelled the tobacco concession. The shah complied in 1892, and the British firms imposed a £500,000 indemnity. Shirazi became the most popular cleric in Shiism, and Shiites bestowed on him the title Imam al-Mujaddid (the renewer of God's religion). His popularity was tested in 1893 when a Persian pilgrim in Samarra attacked an Ottoman gendarme, Hassan bin Zaghbir, of the Albu Malais tribe. This attack escalated to altercations between Ottoman forces and Persians that digressed into overall Shiite versus Sunni violence. The British sent a river gunboat to calm the violence. Ayatollah Shirazi refused to meet with the British consul, sending word that this was a dispute between Muslims. The rift between Sunnis and Shiites was finally resolved with the intervention of and negotiations between Ayatollah Shirazi and the Ottoman *vali* of Baghdad, Hassan Pasha. Shirazi died in 1895 and Samarra declined as a Shiite center as the Sunni conservative Naqshabandi order ascended in Samarra. The Najaf clerical cluster competed

for who would take Shirazi's place on the apex of Shiite leadership. Shiite leadership contenders were divided into factions:

- Mirza Hassan Khalili was supported by the Qajar Persians;
- Sheikh Muhammad Taha Najafi was sponsored by the Iraqi Shiite Arab factions; and
- Hassan Mamaqani was supported by the Ottomans with the encouragement of Turkish Shiite factions.

Najaf was deadlocked with these three contenders until their deaths between 1905 and 1908. Among the debates the Shiites clerical cluster had to contend with was the 1905 Constitutional Reforms in Persia, the 1908 promulgation of the Ottoman Constitution, and a tax protest against the Ottomans. The tax protest was broken up violently after Shiite clerics delivered rousing calls for jihad in Karbala. Three warnings were issued by the Ottomans to break up the protest and Shiites requested asylum from the British against Ottoman cruelty. The Ottomans gave Iraq's Shiites a three-week warning, then a twenty-four-hour warning, and finally a six-hour warning. This series of warnings was designed to get the protestors to disperse gradually and to capitalize on group dynamics until only the most ardent protestors were left in Karbala and Najaf. On the issue of constitutionalism, Iraq's Shiite clerics came to a consensus that *mashrutiyyah* (constitutionalism) equaled the Islamic requirement for *shura*. That *istibdad* (despotism) led to the killing of Prophet Muhammad's grandson and martyring of Hussein and that constitutionalism would have saved Hussein and brought more justice to the people.

THE ARAB AWAKENING

Another pressure within the Arab Middle East was the trend towards what would be called the Arab Awakening. This trend was stimulated first among Christian Arabs educated in American missionary colleges that evolved into the American University of Beirut (1866) and the American University in Cairo (1919), and that spread to Muslim Arabs. The seeds of this movement began in 1875 when the first Arab Nationalist Party was founded in Beirut by five students of the American University of Beirut. From 1875 onward

secret Arab nationalist societies sprang up in Iraq and the Levant that would be suppressed by Ottoman authorities. Many Iraqi and Syrian Arab nationalist thinkers were given asylum in Egypt, then a British protectorate. It was from Egypt that these secret societies formed Ottoman protest movements such as the Group for Ottoman Consultation and the Group Against Evil and Corruption. Christian Arab Nationalists and Muslim Arab Nationalists were split on the outcome of the Arab Awakening. The Christians wanted independence for Arab Ottoman lands, and the Muslims wanted representation and autonomy under Ottoman rule.

In 1913 the First Arab Congress was convened in Paris, and all Arab nationalist exiles as well as those within Arab lands convened in the French capital to work out their differences. Delegates represented Syria, Iraq, and Egypt; there were even Arab exiles who came from the United States to take part in the discussions. Among the representatives were the Ottomans. After weeks of talks a statement recognizing Arab rights in Ottoman dominions and their right to representation and participation in Ottoman government was affirmed. This did not satisfy all Arabs, some of whom wanted independence. This desire for independence would manifest itself in the movement started by the Iraqi Aziz Ali al-Masri and former Arab military officers in the Ottoman army, and would explode on the scene with the promulgation of the 1916 Arab Revolt started in Mecca by Sherief Hussein ibn Ali, the Arab Revolt leader, which made T. E. Lawrence a household name as "Lawrence of Arabia." What made things worse for the Ottomans was their inability to put into practice promises of Arab rights and the need to have equal representation in Istanbul. Even after they had broken up secret societies and participated in the Paris talks with Arab nationalists, Arabs were made to feel like second-class subjects.

RUSSIAN AND ITALIAN ENCROACHMENT ON THE MUSLIM WORLD

If the first Russo-Turkish War portended the carving up of the Ottoman possessions, 1911 would see a more aggressive move towards capitalizing on Ottoman weaknesses and being overstretched in the Caucasus, Arabia, Libya, and Yemen. Designs on the Ottoman Sunni world would encompass the even weaker Persian Qajar Dynasty. A financial dispute between the Qajar Per-

sians and Tsarist Russians led to a war in which Tsarist forces occupied Tabriz. Russian forces proceeded to hang Shiite clerics who called for resistance and jihad. These hangings made matters worse and a general call for jihad caused a widespread insurgency in northern Persia. In 1912 Russian artillery opened fire on the Imam Reza Mosque in Mashhad, demolishing its dome. The call for fighters reached Najaf and Karbala in Iraq, where the call was met by a trickle of Iraqi Shiites into Persia to fight alongside insurgents.

With hostilities between Persia and Russia raging, Italian forces landed in Tripoli and began what would be a three-decade war of Libyan colonization. It is in this war known to Arabs as the conflict in Tarablus Gharb (West Tripoli) that a series of junior Ottoman officers would receive their baptism of fire, and would rise to become integral leaders in the Arab and Turkish nationalist movements. These officers included Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), founder of modern-day Turkey, and Aziz Ali al-Masri, who would play a role in the creation of modern-day Iraq. They were part of a dozen Ottoman military officers sent to organize the Sanussi tribal resistance to Italian forces. They were under the command of Anwar (Enver) Bey, who incited the Sanussis to rebel with a general call for jihad. The war lasted eleven months before digressing into the three-decade-long insurgency campaign in which the Italians controlled the coastal cities and the guerillas controlled much of the Libyan deserts and mountains. The Ottoman-Italian War over Libya stimulated a Balkan uprising against the Turks in 1912. In Iraq, with the departure of Fakhri Pasha who brought order in southern Iraq in the late nineteenth century, tribal lawlessness returned and was not remedied until the arrival of Nazim Pasha with modern weapons in 1909.

NAZIM PASHA ASSUMES BAGHDAD

In 1909 Nazim Pasha balanced military force, tribal negotiation, and public works to attempt the pacification of Iraq. Among the public works he was known for was the filling of military trenches used in centuries of warfare that circled Baghdad and that had become garbage dumps. These trenches had become cesspools and breeding grounds for vermin and disease. Nazim Pasha then undertook the building of locks and dams to address the partial flooding of Baghdad that occurred when the Euphrates River rose every year.

On the military front he opened Iraq's first noncommissioned officer school in which the future leaders of Iraq first received their education; these leaders include Jafar al-Askari, who rose to become a war minister in Iraq, and Nuri al-Said, who rose to become prime minister of Iraq. Perhaps the biggest factor that contributed to lawlessness were that Iraqi troops were not regularly paid, to the point that every Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha holiday (the first marking the end of Ramadan, and the second commemorating the end of the hajj and Abraham's trial of his sacrifice of Isaac) the troops pillaged Baghdad markets, taking what they pleased. This became a custom known to the Iraqis as the *farhood* (storm). Nazim instituted regular pay and provided troops with retro-active pay and proceeded to punish without mercy those troops who continued the practice of theft. He reorganized the Iraqi army, creating a full-time police force that policed Iraq's major cities, and he paid attention to prison reform, adopting the European model of employing prisoners in return for better food and conditions. Stray animals (dogs, cats, rats) that wandered the streets of Baghdad, Najaf, and Basra were disposed of.

Nazim also planned for the pacification of the tribal lawlessness, brigandage, and raiding. The first thing Nazim Pasha did was not to organize a force, but rather to obtain a fatwa from a collective of Shiite and Sunni clergy. The fatwa equated tribal raiding with pre-Islamic practices that descended the Arabs into ignorance and darkness, undermined Islamic unity, and assaulted personal property as well as the rights of Muslims to worship God. The fatwa went on to decree that tribalism deprived a Muslim of life and dignity without just cause. Nazim Pasha used Prophet Muhammad as an example, speaking of when the Meccans deprived Muslims of their rights for their beliefs and how the Prophet governed and arbitrated in Medina. It was signed by seven senior Shiite clerics and seven senior Sunni clerics. The fatwa was distributed throughout Iraq to restore order after two decades of lawlessness among the tribes. Nazim Pasha understood that a fatwa alone would not pacify wayward tribes, but this fatwa gave him religious legitimacy to undertake a systematic military assault. But Nazim decided an alternative tactic than outright assaults on the tribes: he organized a military parade to demonstrate Ottoman power and Nazim Pasha's authority.

Nazim called upon all Ottoman forces in Iraq to convene in Baghdad, thus creating the equivalent of an army corps. They conducted military ma-

neuvers, drill, parades, and exercises before the Ottoman *vali* Nazim Pasha who invited all tribal elders, foreign diplomats, and the senior Shiite and Sunni clergy, even inviting as his honored guests tribal leaders he was likely to wage war against, to observe the military maneuvers. Nazim also had Sunni and Shiite clergy seated near him, cloaking himself in a tangible demonstration of Iraq's centers of power, the religious, the diplomatic, and the tribal, the trappings of Ottoman authority (flags, crests of power, that left no doubt he represented Sultan Mehmet V) while displaying his military forces. The result was a willingness by leaders of tribal raids and bands of thieves to negotiate and pacify Iraq without a shot fired. As long as Nazim Pasha governed security reigned in Baghdad and its environs. Nazim Pasha was recalled in 1911 after being implicated in an amorous scandal with a Christian Armenian woman; this recall led to 20,000 Iraqis protesting the removal of a popular governor. Thousands of telegrams and petitions were sent to the sultan and officers threatened to resign their commissions. It was to no avail, and disorder as well as tribal raids returned to Iraq under the callous rule of Jamal (Djemel) Bey, the new *vali* of Baghdad. Jamal Bey spent his entire governorship militarily subjugating the tribes. He used force to bring stability to Iraq and not the subtle methods of Nazim Pasha who worked with the clergy and cooperative tribes and undertook public works. The later part of Volume 3 of al-Wardi's book ends with a discussion of the fatwa endorsed by Iraq's Sunni and Shiite clergy that addresses the need for Muslims to undertake jihad against Italian forces in Libya. One major cleric dissented, Ayatollah Kazim al-Yazdi, who said the British and Russians had occupied Persian Muslim lands longer than the Italian invasion of Libya. In addition, Yazdi argued that Persian lands were closer to Iraq, and therefore the jihad against Russian occupation of northern Persia and British manipulation and control of Persia took precedence over the Libyan jihad.

CONCLUSION

Al-Wardi's concluding chapters in Volume 3 are a fascinating look at the several technological advancements that changed Iraqi society: the steam engine, telegraph, automobile, postal service, the piston engine, the printing press, newspapers and journals, hospitals, and modern schools. The majority of

these changes involved transport and communication that shrank the country in terms of distance a person or idea could travel into, through, and out of Iraq. He writes of how the telegraph was seen by some Iraqi tribesmen as being the spies of central Ottoman authority and they sought to tear down poles, while others saw it as a means of sending the grievances to Istanbul, with the practice of paying the telegraph operator extra for depressing the keys harder, thinking this would ensure that the message got through.

American military planners can learn much from this volume, understanding the strong influence the Shiite *marjas* have on Iraqi society, the way Nazim Pasha brought peace to Iraq through a mixture of forced clerical interaction and tribal diplomacy. It is vital that al-Wardi's work be highlighted in today's intermediate- and senior-level war colleges to equip America's military leaders with a nuanced understanding of the complexities of Iraqi society. The next chapter will feature Volume 4, which covers Iraq as a stage on which Ottoman and British forces fought in World War I.

4

IRAQ, THE REGION, AND THE GLOBE (1914–1918)

WORLD WAR I

Foreword by Dr. Jeffrey Nadaner, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
for Partnership Strategy and Stability Operations (2004–2008)

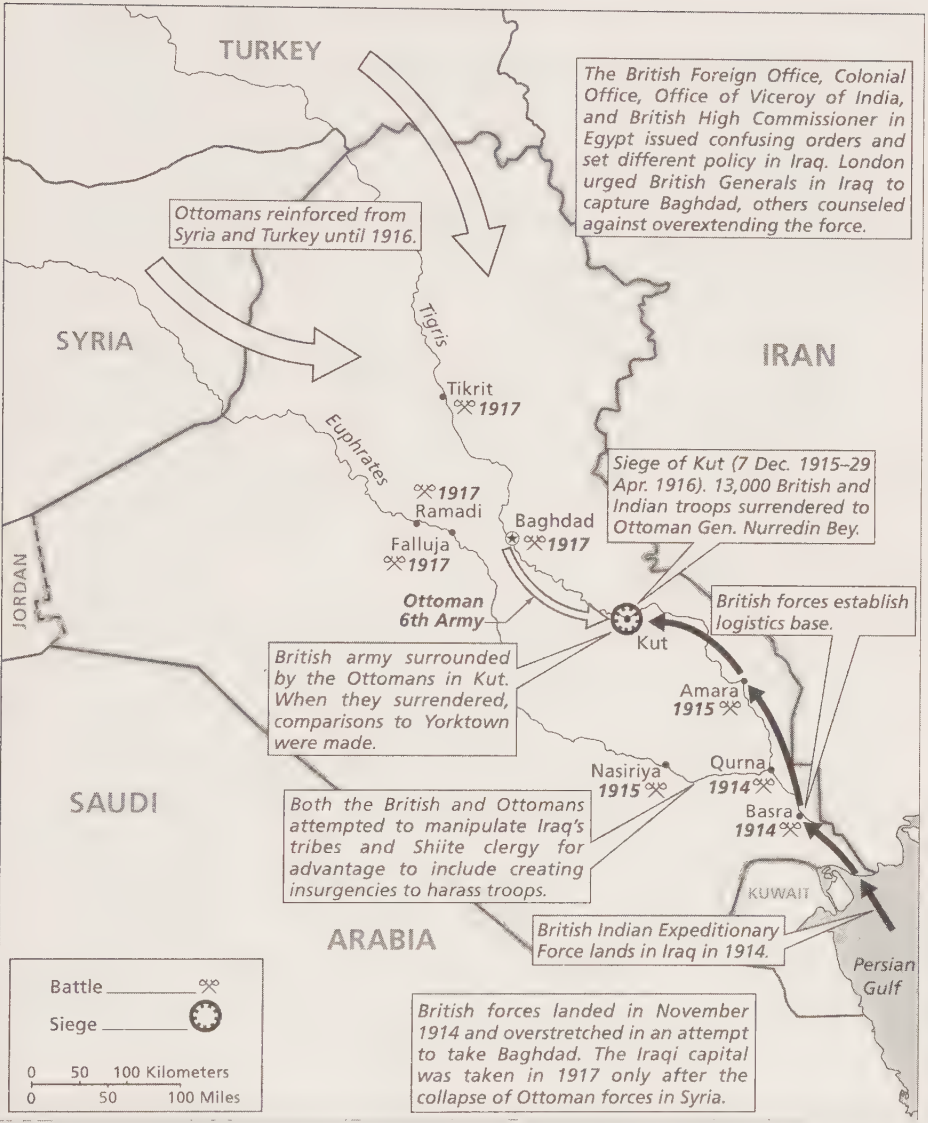
The late Dr. Ali al-Wardi's multivolume *Social Glimpses of Iraqi Modern History* is the definitive work on Iraq's social, military, religious, and political history from the early Ottoman period to the British-installed monarchy of King Feisal I after World War I. It is inconceivable to continue America's involvement in Operation Iraqi Freedom without examining the volumes of al-Wardi, as his book offers insights valuable in understanding the mechanics of governance in Iraq, as well as the use of insurgency and tribes in controlling this region of the Middle East. This work offers America's military leaders an appreciation for the human terrain, a situational awareness that ties tribes, religion, places, and social structures vital to the understanding of the battle space. This chapter covers Volume 4 in the set which delves into the period from 1914 to 1918. This time frame in Iraqi history was dominated by the impact of World War I fought on Iraqi soil between the British and Ottoman Empires. Commander Aboul-Enein has been a valued adviser and an author whom I read with great interest. He firmly believes in the need to translate, highlight, and discuss Arabic works of military significance in the pages of Defense Department journals. This series offers important insight for America's military planners who will be deploying to Iraq and I commend the U.S. Army *Armor* journal for giving Commander Aboul-Enein's work a forum.

INTRODUCTION

Al-Wardi begins by discussing the state of political-military affairs of the Ottoman Empire before delving into Iraq specifically. He understands it is impossible to divorce the affairs of Istanbul from those of Baghdad and Basra. The Ottoman Empire was effectively run by a military junta that styled itself as the Committee of Union and Progress, but generally junta members were known as the Young Turks. In 1914 the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires were fighting the British, French, and Russians. World War I began with the Ottomans maintaining neutrality but leaning towards Germany. Due to war demands, the British refused to transfer two battleships to the Ottomans, and the Germans offered *Breslau* and *Goeben* to the Ottoman Navy. German admiral Souchon was scheduled to deliver the two battle cruisers, so they were crewed and officered by Germans but flew an Ottoman flag. Souchon began the bombardment of Russian ports along the Black Sea beginning with Odessa, and then ordered his crew to turn their guns on Sebastopol and Novransk. Ottoman prime minister Saeed Halim Pasha received word of these bombardments while vacationing for the Eid al-Fitr holidays on October 29, 1914. Two days later, Russia declared war on the Ottoman Empire. As German admiral Souchon was bombarding Russian ports, Gen. Liman von Sanders, head of the German military mission in Turkey and the senior officer in charge of training Ottoman forces, began the mobilization of Ottoman forces. For all purposes, the Ottomans were drawn into World War I by subterfuge and by the Young Turks who wanted to ally themselves with the Germans.

THE PROCESS OF ANNOUNCING A JIHAD

Al-Wardi's book is unique because it focuses on such details as the method and process by which the Ottomans drew up the fatwa for jihad. This book also includes, towards the end, details of the management of tribes by both Ottoman and British forces in Iraq. Khuri *effendi*, the Sheikh-ul-Islam (chief cleric) of Constantinople, drew up a November fatwa making *jihad fard ayn* (individual obligation) incumbent upon all Muslims of the Ottoman domains, as well as Muslims residing in the British, French, and Russian Empires. In November 1914 the Ottoman sultan announced jihad, invoking his title as caliph of all Muslims. The Ottoman sultan's call for jihad included a call to liberate oppressed Muslims around the globe and defend the empire. The



MAP 2. World War I Comes to Iraq: British versus Ottoman Armies

proclamation of jihad of November 23, 1914, was signed by notable clerics of the Ottoman Empire to protect Mecca, Medina, Karbala, Najaf, Damascus (the capital of the Umayyad caliphate), Baghdad (the capital of the Abbasid caliphate), and Muslims who had been oppressed and enslaved for centuries by the European powers. The Ottomans circulated millions of copies of their proclamation and concentrated their jihad propaganda on Egypt, Sudan, India, Persia, and Afghanistan. This overarching climate of the Ottomans framing their conflict with Britain, France, and Russia as a religious war led to the production of such books in Iraq as Muhammad Habeeb al-Mosuli's *The Rope of Unity and the Duty Towards the Islamic Caliphate* (1916) and *English Crimes Against Humanity and Muslims in Particular* (1916). The latter text makes the case that Great Britain is not only the enemy of Muslims, but also the enemy of Asians. It encouraged an uprising and disobedience by Muslims in the following nations:

- 70 million in domains controlled by the British Empire, chiefly in India. It also caused the added incitement of the fiercely independent Afghan Emirate under King Amanullah, who finally attacked British India in May 1919, starting the third Anglo-Afghan War. After World War I, Amanullah gained complete autonomy from the British through an armistice.
- 16 million in the British protectorates of Egypt and the Sudan;
- 20 million in French Africa and British Africa; and
- 20 million in Russia.

GERMAN KAISER WILHELM PLAYS MUSLIM IDENTITY POLITICS

The German kaiser did not object to being called hajj or even Mohammad Wilhelm. Like Napoleon Bonaparte who, upon seizing Egypt in 1798, adopted Arab dress and claimed to have seen Prophet Muhammad in his dreams, the kaiser saw in these identity politics a means of undermining British and French influence in their respective Muslim colonies. The tactic predictably concerned the British and French; in particular British intelligence officers and military planners expended great thought on how to counter this Ottoman call for jihad. Of note, the deposed sultan Abdul-Hamid II wrote in

his memoirs that his brother Sultan Muhammad V erred in calling a jihad; he believed that the Ottomans should have seized the initiative and attacked Russia, instead of relying on the irregular mobilization of the *ummah* (the worldwide Muslim community). Although Germany made efforts to incite an Ottoman jihad against their common foes, one aspect of German propaganda had a negative impact: the touting of the new technology of the zeppelin. Ottoman subjects and Iraqis who had only heard of the zeppelin saw it as a wonder weapon, and believed that their participation in a jihad was not necessary because German leaflets touted the ability of the zeppelin to bomb the warships of the British Royal Navy. German agents incited Persians against British and French diplomats. Their anti-French and -British propaganda was so effective that the Germans jeopardized not only the safety of British and French citizens in Persia, but also their own safety and that of their families, since Persian mobs could not tell British and French from Germans walking on the streets.

Ottoman military thinking focused on the offense and neglected the defense; this led to their neglect of shoring up defenses on the Dardanelles and in Iraq. The Ottomans focused on attacking the Caucasus and the Russian front. This thinking was due partly to Ottoman delusions of past grandeur that focused on the offense, and the need to bring their war to a quick and decisive conclusion. Al-Wardi discusses four Ottoman fronts in World War I: the Caucasus, the Dardanelles, Sinai (in Egypt), and Iraq. This chapter will discuss only the Sinai front that so worried British military leaders. In other sections of the book the battles fought between the Ottomans and British in Iraq will be discussed; the campaigns in the Caucasus and Dardanelles did not directly impact Iraq.

THE SINAI FRONT

Jamal (Djemal) Pasha was commander of the 4th Ottoman Army stationed in the Levant. He was charged by the Ottoman general staff to conduct attacks on the Sinai and on the British-controlled Suez Canal. In November 1914 he left Istanbul and traveled to Damascus to assume command of the 4th Ottoman Army. In Damascus he was given the premature title of liberator of Egypt.

Of note, *al-liwa al-sharief* (the prophet's banner) was kept in Medina and was sent to Damascus, arriving a few days before the arrival of Djemal

Pasha, the commander of the 4th Ottoman Army and governor of Syria. The banner was taken by special train from Medina in Arabia, stopping in Jerusalem, before arriving in Damascus; the purpose of this was to incite support for the jihad. The banner later was used to lead the 4th Ottoman Army in their reconquest of British-controlled Egypt.

Ottoman forces moved in November 1914 towards Palestine to enter the Sinai. Routes along the way were lined with banners of Quranic verses under which the soldiers marched. Djemal Pasha at some point decided to move his entire army by night to conceal their intention and movements, but all the fanfare made this move difficult to conceal. The British knew the Ottomans were deploying towards the Suez Canal, but did not know when or where the attack would commence, and how the Egyptian populace and its armed forces would react if they attempted to stop this invasion. Elements of the 4th Ottoman Army crossed the Suez Canal in wooden boats in February 1915. Dogs gave the Ottomans away, and the British hurriedly brought up machine-gun units on the West Bank of the canal, reinforcing them with a defensive infantry force from the town of Ismailiyah brought up to where the main Ottoman effort was believed to be using steam ships and transports. Before the assault, Djemal Pasha invoked the famous speech that Tariq ibn Ziyad had given as he was about to conquer Spain in 711 CE: "Brothers in Islam! We now have the enemy in front of us and the deep sea behind us. We cannot return to our homes, because we have burnt our boats. We shall now either defeat the enemy and win or die a coward's death by drowning in the sea. Who will follow me?"

Only six hundred Ottomans crossed the Suez Canal, and many were killed or captured. To make matters worse, no thought had been given to logistically resupplying the Ottoman force. Ali Fuad Bey, an Ottoman officer present, wrote of the state of the demoralized forces when Djemal Pasha ordered a retreat. Ali Fuad Bey noted that the Ottoman forces fought tenaciously but lacked proper logistical supply and enough crossing boats to decisively defeat the British along the Canal Zone. It is estimated that five thousand Ottomans were casualties and Djemal couched his retreat as a victory, using some of the crossing boats in parade in the streets of Beirut and Damascus. Saddam's infamous information minister "Baghdad Bob," who maintained the fiction of Iraqi victory while U.S. forces were within sight of the city, is not a new phenomenon in Middle Eastern conflicts.

THE ARAB REVOLT

On June 10, 1916, Hussein ibn Ali, the sherief of Mecca and a descendant of Prophet Muhammad, declared an Arab Revolt against the Ottomans. This revolt, with the aid of British intelligence, tied down 12,000 Ottoman troops in Mecca, Taif, Jeddah, and Medina for the duration of the war (approximately two years, from 1916 to 1918). Al-Wardi's work exposes the mechanics of how the British worked the Arab leaders of this revolt; many of these were Arab military officers in the service of the Ottoman Army and included a number of Iraqis. These Iraqi Arab military officers would form the cadre of leadership when the British set up the Iraqi monarchy after World War I.

Sherief (Effendi) al-Farouki from Mosul had fought in the Dardanelles campaign, and had deserted from the Ottoman Army to the British Army. He was taken to Cairo and debriefed by British military intelligence, and was used as an adviser to Sherief Hussein ibn Ali of Mecca. Al-Farouki worked with Sherief Hussein towards declaring a revolt against the Ottomans. He became Sherief Hussein's representative in Cairo. Nuri al-Said deserted Ottoman forces and hid in Basra. When the British invaded Basra, he was interned in British India. Upon hearing of the Arab Revolt, he volunteered his services to Sherief Hussein and was moved to Cairo. The British selected ten officers and 150 prisoners of war (POWs) of Arab origins who had been captured from the Ottoman Army, and transferred them from India to Egypt.

In Egypt, Nuri al-Said met the ship and briefed these POWs on the Arab Revolt and the need for them to fight towards Arab independence from the Ottomans, who treated their Arab subjects as second-class citizens. The Arab POWs were unconvinced and asked if they were to be officered by British officers, like the French who had officered North African contingents. The British and members advocating an Arab Revolt among the Syrians and Iraqis agreed that this Arab unit would officer themselves and form their own Arab unit. There was concern among the Syrians and Iraqis about being led by British officers, represented by such sentiments as, "Are we Egyptians or Indians to be colonized?!"

Of the ten officers and 150 soldiers that departed Indian POW camps for Egypt, four officers and 15 soldiers refused to join the Arab Revolt. The remaining men landed in the port of Jeddah in August 1916. Once these Arab military personnel interacted with the local population, however, they found

public opinion against the Arab Revolt. The majority of townspeople in the Hijaz saw this revolt as an allegiance with the infidel British. Residents questioned these Syrians and Iraqis who roamed the streets of Jeddah how they could even conceive of fighting fellow Muslims. Nuri al-Said was appointed deputy commander in chief of the Arab Revolt, and his first order of business was to isolate from the main population the Arab military personnel selected to be part of the Arab Revolt. The experiment to graft Arab POWs to the Arab Revolt was an ultimate failure; at the end only six officers had joined Sherief Hussein.

In November 1916 British military officials moved a few Arab POWs from India to Rabigh along the Red Sea coast. The plan was to have them rally around Prince Ali, son of Sherief Hussein of Mecca, appealing to their pan-Arab sentiments. This netted a few dozen Arab officers and soldiers but not the hundreds needed to make a difference in the revolt. Many brought from India to Arabia who refused to fight the Ottomans were shipped to Egypt and then back to India.

In Egypt Lt. Col. Jafar al-Askari, an ardent Arab nationalist of Iraqi origin, was used by the British to travel to POW camps to convince Arab prisoners to join the revolt and achieve Arab self-determination. It was al-Askari who kept Sherief Hussein apprised of the mood of Arab POWs and how many had been recruited to the revolt. His reports led Sherief Hussein of Mecca to cease pursuing Arab-Ottoman military POWs for fear they would mount a coup against the sherief of Mecca. Al-Askari would be charged by Sherief Hussein to train a regular standing army in Hijaz in 1917.

Fakhri Pasha was Ottoman commander of Medina. When the Arab Revolt occurred, Fakhri saw the actions of Sherief Hussein as treason, an alliance with infidels, and a conspiracy against Islam and Muslims. He was a committed Ottoman, steeped in returning the Ottoman Empire to its previous glory, and was a practicing Bektashi Sufi Muslim. He mounted the podium of the grand mosque in Medina, containing the tomb of Prophet Muhammad, and publicly cursed the sherief of Mecca and all Arabs who joined him in waging warfare against Islam. Fakhri Pasha continued to resist the Arab Revolt and refused to surrender his post as had his peers in Jeddah, Mecca, and Taif. He would remain in a state of war even after the Turks and British concluded a truce in October 1918. Fakhri refused orders from Istanbul to surrender and

hid the news of the November armistice from Ottoman officers in Medina, ordering that resistance continue. Two irregular armies of the Arab Revolt attempted to dislodge Gen. Fakhri Pasha, the Military Governor of Medina, but failed. Finally, in November 1918 he was overtaken inside the Tomb of Prophet Muhammad and taken to the camp of Prince Abdullah ibn Hussein, son of the Sherief of Mecca, who commanded the tribes that conducted the assault on Medina. Fakhri Pasha turned to Ibrahim al-Rawi and asked, "Were you with us?" Rawi replied, "I was with you [in the Ottoman Army] until his majesty [the sherief of Mecca] declared independence and I went with my people." Fakhri was given full military courtesies and a gold pocket watch with a Bektashi inscription in honor of his piety and tenacious defense of the Prophet's city Medina.

IRAQ AT THE START OF WORLD WAR I

On one morning of August 1914, Iraqis awoke to the beat of drums and pamphlets ordering the mobilization of Iraqis to arms and to prepare for travel. Iraqis were to be mobilized to fight on the Russian front. Among the defenses the Ottomans neglected in their obsession with the offense had been Iraq. Ottoman minister of war Anwar (Enver) Pasha entered World War I with the premise that Turkey would expand its holdings and not necessarily defend the realm. Iraq had only four regiments: in Mosul, Kirkuk, Baghdad, and Basra. The Mosul and Kirkuk regiments were sent to Damascus to merge with the 4th Ottoman Army for its push towards the Suez Canal.

At best, the Ottoman general staff saw Iraq as a secondary front and sent a telegram to Ottoman leaders in Baghdad ordering the organization of tribal militia. Of note, the Ottoman general staff were even more ignorant of Iraq than the British had been, and did not study its defenses or conduct military exercises. According to Muqbal Bey, a senior officer in the general staff, Istanbul possessed only one map of Iraq that was a 1:1.5 million scale. The Ottomans in the years leading to World War I did nothing to respond to defensive shortfalls in and around Basra, the most likely area for any British landing in Iraq. Even when a large contingent left India and landed in Bahrain, the Ottomans did nothing. The British initially planned a small military expedition to protect the oil pipelines and refineries of Abadan in Persia, sending in 4,500 troops. The British took Basra with ease, and southern Iraq quickly; thirty-four days after landing at Basra, they stood at the outskirts of Baghdad.

Al-Wardi's book discusses the reasons why the Ottomans were weak in fighting the British in Iraq. These reasons include military recruitment being viewed by the Iraqis as a tax that the tribes hoped and worked hard to evade. Many hid to avoid conscription, leading Ottoman officials to incarcerate the senior male member of a family and not release him until the draft dodger had presented himself. Anwar Pasha signed a decree ordering the execution of half of the captive draft evaders and sent the other half to the front. Wealthy Iraqis bribed their way far from the front or out of conscription, while others attempted to secure citizenship outside Ottoman domains; many took Persian citizenship. Hospitals and logistical support for the revolt were inadequate. Other problems included these:

- (1) The Ottoman government apparatus in Iraq was very corrupt, far from direct Ottoman central control. Officials sent there deemed it a place to make a tidy fortune.
- (2) Tribal loyalties superseded Ottoman loyalties.
- (3) War in Iraq was waged from Basra to Mosul. Central Iraq, commonly known as al-Anbar, was mired in tribal warfare.
- (4) Most Iraqis were resistant to conscription. One reason thousands of Iraqis resisted the draft was that thousands of Ottoman conscripts died in Najd supporting the Ibn Rashids against the British-sponsored Ibn Sauds, the confederacy that evolved into modern-day Saudi Arabia. The Ottomans, aside from attempting to pacify the Ibn Sauds, were troubled by the forcible spread of Wahhabism (an austere and intolerant form of Sunni Islam), and the use of evangelizing Wahhabism as an excuse to loot and pillage. In addition, thousands of Ottoman conscripts died as a result of disease, hunger, and thirst.

PLANES OVER BAGHDAD

Before World War I, Baghdad residents had never seen an airplane. Many were astounded by this new invention, and, like many others at their first sight of a plane, wondered how wood and metal stayed aloft. These planes were part of the British Expeditionary Forces, used primarily for reconnaissance. It is reported that in October 1915 tribes and residents on rooftops attempted to

shoot the contraptions down—not out of any military countermeasures, but out of sheer ignorance, thinking it perhaps a beast, or perhaps that the persons in the plane were spying on their families.

These planes were stationed between Baghdad and Salman Pak. The British used their planes to cut Ottoman telegraph wires, flying from region to region to cut communications between the Ottoman central government and their forces. During one of these operations a malfunctioning British plane was forced to land and the pilots were captured by Iraqi tribesmen on horseback, providing the Ottomans with an intact plane and its two pilots. The plane along with the British captives were displayed in Baghdad. Lost on most westerners was that the Ottomans used this incident to weave a propaganda campaign for the Iraqis that this was a victory from God. The campaign was complete with poems, sermons, and leaflets.

In the Middle East public perception was viewed as a tool of warfare, and the result was to create a more challenging and hostile environment for the British. This is what al-Qaida does today, using religious symbols, fragments of Islam, conspiracy theories, and actual news to weave a hostile climate for American forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. More British planes would appear in 1917 as General Maude attempted to take Baghdad. In this case, the plane was a weapon of fear for Iraqis at this late period of the war. In January 1917 a squadron of British planes dropped seven bombs on Baghdad; in another operation three days before the fall of Baghdad a British plane landed near the Dujailah-Baghdad rail line and packed it with dynamite. The Ottomans discovered and removed the explosives before they could be detonated. The Ottomans in Iraq countered that the British RAF planes were an assault on the dignity of Iraqi women, because they were able to spy on women from the air. They declared that women should remain covered inside their own homes. This led to outrage and increased attempts to shoot planes down.

OTTOMAN IRAQ'S TALKS WITH IBN SAUD OF ARABIA

A little-discussed aspect of World War I was the Ottoman and British cultivation of tribes to gain an edge on one another. In 1914 the Ottomans dispatched Mahmoud Shukri al-Alusi from Iraq to negotiate with Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud, and a year later the Ottomans sent Moheiddine al-Naqib to Afghanistan. Both men were to negotiate with tribes to undermine British influence in Arabia

and Afghanistan, respectively. In August 1914 the Ottomans sent a note to Ibn Saud that weapons and officers would be sent to organize his tribes against the British. Ibn Saud shared this Ottoman correspondence with the British resident in the Gulf, and as a result British intelligence sent Indian agents under the guise that they wanted to join the jihad to get fresh intelligence on Ottoman defenses in southern Iraq to include information on artillery dispositions. British double agents uncovered plots by the Afghans centered on sending German and Ottoman advisers and troops not only to Afghan tribes, but also to Pashtun tribes in northern India to foment an insurgency against British outposts in Northern India, modern-day Pakistan. It was deemed by British authorities that the only way to counter this call for jihad would be through supporting nationalism, and so the Arab Revolt was born. The Arab Revolt was to encompass not only the Red Sea coast, but also the Persian Gulf, Iraq, and the Levant. It centered on strong tribal personalities such as Ibn Saud in Najd, the sherief of Mecca (the Hashemites) on the Red Sea coast, Sheikh Sayyid Taleb Naqib of Muhammara, Sheikh Khazzal in southern Iraq, and Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah of Kuwait. When World War I broke out, the British consul in Basra relocated his offices to Muhammara tribal territory, the area where the port of Umm Qasr is today.

Al-Wardi discusses the details of World War I and the counterinsurgency use of tribes by the British and Ottoman forces fighting in Iraq. This needs to be rediscovered in light of U.S. involvement in Iraq today. Sheikh Sayyid Taleb al-Naqib eventually would be offered the general governorship of Basra, with the right to dispense patronage through city appointments. Taleb responded that he wanted to see an end to Ottoman rule and he wanted a new independent Arab enclave in southern Iraq. He wanted to achieve this result with only material aid from the British and then the establishment of a protectorate over this new entity like that of Egypt. The British refused to grant Taleb's request of a British protectorate over his lands.

Of note, the British had to balance the interests of Ibn Saud, al-Sabah of Kuwait, Hashemites of Mecca, and the Muhammara Confederacy of south Iraq. As talks with Taleb and the British broke down, the sheikh received word of Ottoman intentions to place him under arrest. Taleb was given a cipher telegraph code to the Ottoman war ministry. He proceeded to forge telegraphed orders from Anwar Pasha, making him envoy to negotiate with Ibn Saud in the

Najd, and made his escape to the Najd using these forged orders. In October 1914 Sheikh Taleb arrived at al-Jahrah in Kuwait as a guest of Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah. The British consul made Taleb a final offer—the governor generalship of Basra, with the right to pass on the governorship to his heirs. If he accepted, he would land with Sir Percy Cox on the Faw Peninsula with a British force, with Taleb as the governor general of Basra and Cox, His Majesty's Representative in Mesopotamia. Taleb refused this final offer and Sheikh Mubarak threatened to keep him in Kuwait until he accepted the British offer. Sheikh Taleb then said to Sheikh Mubarak that he had a pistol and that one bullet was for the ruler of Kuwait, the other for Sheikh Taleb if he was not allowed to depart Kuwait immediately. In November he arrived in the central Arabian city of Buraydah and was visited by the emir of Najd, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud, who in 1932 created modern-day Saudi Arabia. Taleb addressed the people of Buraydah, a Wahhabi bastion, giving an anti-British speech. Both Taleb and Ibn Saud knew this speech was for public consumption, and both despised the Ottomans, while working with British agents to gain advantages, power, and influence. They rode together northward to respond to the jihad, but delayed their arrival in the hopes the British and Ottoman forces exhausted themselves fighting. Arriving at the town of al-Zulfi, word reached them that the British had easily taken Basra and it was decided to stop the expedition. Ibn Saud offered Taleb the governorship of the eastern province, an offer he accepted.

Fifteen days before the entrance of the Ottomans into World War I the British dispatched an expeditionary force from India to protect their oil interests in Abadan, Persia. If the Ottomans were to declare war, then the tactical plan was to occupy Basra. It took seven days to travel from Bombay to Bahrain, and the expeditionary force arrived in October 1914. The tribes cultivated by the British would pay dividends, when the Ottomans declared war; the general in charge of the British task force consulted with the emir of Kuwait on how best to take the Fao Citadel.

In early November 1914 HMS *Odin* silenced four artillery guns and took the citadel in one hour. The Ottomans received word from escaping residents and prepared a force of fewer than four hundred to repulse the landing, but it was too little too late. The British landed seventeen boats carrying a regiment of infantry under the command of General Barrett. Seizing Fao, India sent orders to take Basra. The Ottomans would stand in a place called

Kut Zain, across from Muhammara, building a hasty defensive line made up of 4,500 troops. These troops faced the British 6th (Indian) Poona Reinforced Infantry Division. An immediate British tactic was to set about cutting telegraph wires leading northward to deprive the Ottomans of instant intelligence on military maneuvers. The hastiness of the Ottoman defense and use of tribal levies mixed with regular forces led to a defeat at Kut Zain. This led to a collapse of morale. Sobhi Bey ordered a withdrawal from Basra, ceding the city to advancing British forces. He scuttled three riverboats to delay the advance of British river forces up the Euphrates River.

In Basra looting commenced and elders of the city proceeded to British warships at anchor pleading for assistance to restore order. The British responded by shelling the city, landing a force that caught looters in the act, hanging them on sight as a warning to others. General Barrett and Sir Percy Cox, the general's political adviser, landed in Basra with the rest of the British 6th (Indian) Poona Reinforced Infantry Division. Cox was fluent in Arabic and gave a speech in front of the Ottoman governor's palace in the name of the commanding general. He indicated that Great Britain had occupied Basra in its war with the Ottoman Turks, saying, "We bear the people of Basra no ill will, harm, or retribution. The Turks have fled and in its place the Union Jack flies to which you all will enjoy its protection, freedom, and justice in your religious and worldly affairs." Orders were issued to British troops to treat the populace with courtesy. The ceremony ended with the raising of the Union Jack, the playing of *God Save the King*, and the firing of the guns from warships at anchor and riverboats within the estuary in a dramatic show of British military power.

OCCUPATION OF AL-KURNA

Sobhi Bey withdrew his forces from Basra to Kurna, located between the Euphrates and Tigris (Dijaila in Arabic) Rivers. General Barrett solicited permission from India to occupy Kurna. A force under Colonel Fraizer was sent to take the village overlooking Kurna, called Mazeerah, on the left bank of the Tigris. With little Ottoman resistance, the village was taken and used to set up a logistical base within sight of Kurna. Even more important, Fraizer set up artillery batteries that would, in conjunction with river gunboats, pound

Turkish forces from the riverbank, with roving fire leading into Kurna. The overwhelming firepower led Ottoman soldiers and officers to flee. Some flung themselves into the Tigris to swim away from the pounding of shells; among those was al-Wardi's father who had served in the Ottoman Army. British forces entered Kurna and felt deeply let down, as this was the place where Adam and Eve allegedly had landed after they were cast out from heaven. The city was in squalor and consisted of mud huts and hovels. It was after the taking of Basra and Kurna that new goods flooded Iraqi markets, such as chocolates, mass-produced soap, detergent, tinned meat, pasteurized milk, and shaving items. With the presence of the British Army, profiteering began, and the price of regular staples such as sugar and rice shot up astronomically, adding further pressures on British forces. British troops brought with them gold and silver specie, paying high prices for supplies, making them beyond the reach of most Arabs.

OTTOMANS INCITE A JIHAD

American military professionals not only must look at the actual tactics of battle, but also must discuss the hidden aspects that shape the battlefield environment. We cannot neglect or be blind to the behind-the-scenes discussions among clerics and other power centers of a society that in their own way create a climate hostile to our forces. This section will discuss how the Ottomans attempted to work with Iraq's Shiites and Sunni religious leaders to incite a popular uprising against the British. Al-Wardi's work highlights the hidden aspects of World War I that today make part of how our adversary shapes and influences perception in order to create a hostile environment for security forces. A telegram from Ottoman officials in Baghdad arrived in November 1914, addressed to the leading Shiite *hawza* (clerical center) in Najaf. The telegram asked for a Shiite fatwa to amplify the Ottoman sultan's declaration of jihad against the British, French, and Russians.

SHIITE CLERGY CONVENE A WAR COUNCIL

One ayatollah declaring a jihad does not necessarily connote a general Shiite uprising. In this case only those thousands who consider Ayatollah Yazdi their imam answered his call. This fatwa declaring a jihad by Yazdi pressured the

other Shiite clergy to call a conference in Kazimiyah to reconcile Shiite differences on the issue of calling a jihad, and then to reconcile Shiite and Sunni fatwas by declaring a jihad and supporting the Ottomans. Some Shiite clerics in the Najaf *hawza* argued that this request for a Shiite anti-British fatwa by the Ottomans was exposing the Shiite flock to certain destruction, because the British had highly advanced weapons.

Sheikh Mehdi al-Khalsi was among those who advocated jihad. He wrote epistles and fatwas in local newspapers that could be compared to an early twentieth-century version of the internet fatwas, but in his case he had printing presses at his disposal. The clerics strategized on methods of getting their tribal flock to insist that tribal leaders take on the jihad against the British. Tactics included Ayatollah Yazdi traveling on Ashoura to recruit and generate momentum for jihad. The Germans and Ottomans expended much money to clerics to incite, recruit, and arm mujahideen (fighters). Some fabulously wealthy clerics such as the Sunni Muhammad Haboubi gave of their own money for the cause. It was after the Kazimiyah Conference that the danger of a general uprising in Iraq became very real because the majority of the Shiite clergy endorsed the concept of declaring a joint jihad with the Ottomans.

When Basra and Kurna fell, Javeed Pasha, the Ottoman *vali* of Baghdad, was relieved of his post, and was made a scapegoat for the indifference and neglect of Iraq's defenses by the general staff. Al-Wardi's book highlights Ottoman blunders in the defense of Iraq. Javeed Pasha was commander in chief of Iraqi forces and *vali*; after 1915 it was decided to split these two posts of governor and military commander. Suleiman Nazif Bey was made governor, and Suleiman Askary Bey was made the military commander. Askary Bey was selected because he was the lead adviser on Iraq to the Ottoman general staff in Istanbul, and he had served many years in Iraq. This assignment was disastrous for Iraq because he was stuck in the offensive mode of thinking that permeated the Ottoman general staff. Askary Bey, while on general staff in Istanbul, advocated an assault on Britain's Indian possessions by agitating the Muslim population in what is now Afghanistan and Pakistan. He would lead Ottoman forces in Iraq into an offense that they were not prepared for, against the British Expeditionary Forces landing in Iraq. Askary Bey's first order of business upon arriving in Baghdad was to execute the deputy governor of Basra who had ordered a retreat and to go on the attack.

BATTLE OF ROTAWI (OR AL-ROUTAH)

Askary Bey collected a force of regulars and tribal levies, separating them into three divisions along the three fronts of Shuaybah, Kurna, and Arabistan. He hoped to link all three divisions then press on three fronts into Muhamarah to seek retribution on its sheikh for his pro-British stance. The division of what amounted to an army corps into three divisions attacking separate objectives only served to weaken Ottoman plans to retake Kurna. The Kurna force met a British force along a canal called Rotawi, nine miles from Kurna. Al-Wardi does not discuss the details of this engagement except to write that the battle took four hours with the British hoping that river gunboats along the Tigris and artillery could be a force multiplier for its smaller infantry force meeting the Ottomans at Rotawi.

Despite heavy Ottoman casualties, the British defenses broke and a retreat commenced. The Ottoman force was unlike the defenders of Kurna and Basra who retreated under heavy artillery: this force stood and fought. The commander of the division Sayyid Mahdy al-Haidary remained with his force, despite shells falling around his tent.

The British faced two tactical problems in Iraq: (1) the ease of their earlier victories led to overconfidence, and (2) as they advanced northward deeper into Iraq, their lines of communications were stretched thin. Other problems the British forces faced were an overdependence on technology and a need for a larger force. The advance towards Baghdad was detracting the British forces in Iraq from their main mission of protecting British oil fields in Persia, which were under attack from one of the three divisions commanded by Askary Bey (see Map 2).

BATTLE OF ARABISTAN

Arabistan, now called Khuzestan, was an area of British national strategic interest. At the time this was Britain's chief source of oil and refined gasoline. The British forces dispatched from India before the declaration of war were sent to protect these interests, but the ease of conquest by the British force in Mesopotamia led to the taking of Basra and Kurna. These decisions to take these cities were made not only by British commanders on the ground, but also by officials in British India and officials in London. It was in Arabistan that tribalism became a crucial component of the Iraqi campaign. A message

(along with the joint religious edict) was sent by the Shiite clergy to Sheikh Khazzal, the chieftain in charge of the Persian side of Arabistan, advising him to take the side of the Muslims against the occupying British Army. They said their edict from Najaf applied to Ottomans and Persians, Shiites and Sunnis alike. The edict was signed by five senior Shiite clerics, with a separate telegram from Grand Shiite Cleric Sayyid al-Yazdi. In addition, Sheikh Khazzal was close to one member of the Shiite clergy, Sheikh Abdel-Karim al-Jazairi. Sheikh Khazzal asked Sheikh al-Jazairi to lend his assistance and pledge his allegiance to the Ottomans. Participating in a jihad was not without risks to Khazzal, who was known to be in the pay of the British:

- (1) There was frustration among the tribes within Khazzal's confederation over taxes, and this jihad could easily be turned against him.
- (2) A power shift from tribal to clerical might occur, in which Eissa Kamal-al-Din, the highest clerical authority in Arabistan, would take control of Khazzal's fighters.

In January 1915 an Ottoman force under the command of Tewfik (Bey) al-Khalidi arrived in Amarah and encamped twenty miles from Ahvaz. With the Ottoman regular forces were tribal levies from the tribes of Bani Lam, Bani Taraf, Rabi'ah, and Zarqan. Upon arrival of the Bawiah tribe in Ahvaz they joined the jihad against the British forces in Mesopotamia. These tribes raided British oil interests and sabotaged pipelines. More importantly they turned against the Bani Kaab Tribal Confederation and its Chief Sheikh Khazzal for his allegiance to the British. With British help the Bani Kaab were able to defeat the Bawiah tribe. General Barrett sent forces from southern Iraq into Ahvaz to protect oil interests. While making their way to Ahvaz, the British contingent was set upon by tribes, leading to a withdrawal of the British force back towards Basra. The tribes captured two British artillery guns. The tribal chief of the Bani Lam offered a gold piece for every British or Indian head brought to him, which led the Bedouins to give their British prisoners no quarter.

THE IMPACT OF THE JIHAD ON KUWAIT

Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah was a close ally of Sheikh Khazzal, and saw how the Ottomans along with half a dozen tribes threatened him; he was eager

to aid his ally. A segment of Sheikh Mubarak's tribal confederation found fighting for the British distasteful, however, and two clerics within Mubarak's inner circle considered fighting for the Ottomans a religious duty. With the momentum of Ottoman forces regrouping, those tribes backing the Ottomans began to ascend and the position of tribal chieftains such as Mubarak al-Sabah and Sheikh Khazzal became precarious. The two clerics with al-Sabah's confederacy began to draw away fighters, and Mubarak had to persuade clans that his alliance with the British provided autonomy from the Ottomans. This argument by Sheikh Mubarak was to no avail, however, and Mubarak al-Sabah had to fight Mohammad al-Shanqati as a side skirmish between British and Ottoman forces in the Battle of Shuaybah.

BATTLE OF SHUAYBAH

Located nine miles southeast of Basra, Shuaybah was an old fortress that the British reinforced upon their landing in Basra. The British built extensive defensive works around Shuaybah. Askary Bey led a force of 6,000 Ottoman regulars and 20,000 tribal levies. Askary Bey opted for a direct frontal assault with the 6,000 regulars in the center and 10,000 tribal fighters on each flank, this despite objections from tribal chiefs and even German military advisers recommending against a frontal assault. What they proposed instead was to isolate Shuaybah from Basra and then fight a harassing action combined with a siege of the Shuaybah fortress using Ottoman regulars. This action was made easier by heavy flooding of the Tigris that caused Shuaybah to be accessible primarily by riverboat, with the Ottomans occupying the high ground. The result was that despite the odds favoring the Ottomans, the British barely etched out a victory using concentrated disciplined firepower and the planting of rumors that Askary Bey had been killed. This firepower came in the form of sending several river gunboats to Shuaybah, along with land artillery to decimate the Ottoman frontal assaults. Askary, hearing of the rout and collapse of his forces, blamed Iraqi tribes and shot himself. The British buried him with full military honors. The Ottomans had suffered 4,200 casualties and 700 captured.

The Battle of Shuaybah was the first battle in which some Muslim Indian contingents within the British forces showed signs of demoralization fighting fellow Muslims. Sheikh Mubarak of Kuwait was able to rid himself of tribal

threats including contingents within his own confederacy that defected and fought alongside the Ottomans. Factors that contributed to Ottoman defeat were tribes impatiently wanting booty and departing the field of battle when satisfied or when the picking of spoils were slim, antiquated weapons, inadequate supplies, and spies paid by the British to spread disinformation within the Ottoman camps, the most effective being the false report that Askary Bey had been killed. Add to this the personality of Askary Bey, a military commander applying nineteenth-century preindustrial age tactics against the mind and technology of British commanders steeped in the experiences of studying the Franco-Prussian War and the American Civil War. The front in Arabistan was the scene of an interesting development, a collapse not due to any British intervention, but due to petty jealousies over the distribution of payment to different tribes. The events of Shuaybah led to an order from Ottoman officials in Baghdad to retreat northward. The British initially started their takeover of Basra with one division, the 6th, under General Barrett; after the Battle of Shuaybah during which they suffered 1,200 casualties, the British sent another division, the 12th, under General Nixon.

NURREIDINE BEY TAKES COMMAND

In April 1915 the British put together a nine thousand-troop force that was transported by land and riverboat to protect Ahvaz. With no Ottoman threats, the British decided to take vengeance on the Bani Taraf tribe that raided British infantry formation, killing four British officers. The Ottomans never again threatened British oil interests in Persia. With the suicide of Askary Bey, the Ottomans' general staff decided to recombine the position of governor and commander in chief in one man: Nurreidine Bey. What distinguished Nurreidine from Askary Bey was his studious military mind. Before taking his post in May 1915, he studied newspapers and reports about the Iraq front, gaining a sense of the battlefield he was about to take command of. As a result his first order was to shut down Iraq's press, leaving just one pro-Ottoman newspaper open. His rationale was to impose a news blackout due to the impact the press had on the morale of Iraqis and their willingness to side with the Turks. Nurreidine then turned his attention to Iraq's Christians and Jews, viewing them as British fifth columns. Were it not for Sheikh Noman al-Azami and Fuad Daftary Bey, Nurreidine would have conducted massacres

of these communities. Both Iraqis convinced the Ottoman governor that these were loyal and hard-working communities, so Nurreidine instead relocated them from Baghdad to Mosul.

GENERAL TOWNSHEND AND GEN. HALIM BEY

Soon after the Battle of Shuaybah and the arrival of the extra division, General Barrett turned over command of the British 6th (Indian) Poona Reinforced Infantry to Major General Townshend. These extra forces would be needed to accomplish the objective of securing British gains and reinforcing oil refineries in Abadan. Townshend was ambitious and coveted the rank of lieutenant general. He was heavily influenced by Napoleonic tactics, and attempted to mirror his deployments with those of Napoleon. The Ottomans had concentrated their forces north of Kurna under the command of Gen. Halim Bey, a vain man who saw his assignment to Iraq as an exile from the Ottoman capital, and who focused on amassing wealth and neglected his command.

BATTLE OF THE RIVERBOATS

Al-Wardi's book discusses how General Townshend used a combination of river gunboats, five hundred local Iraqi canoes, and air support combined with ground infantry to give him envelopment options for Ottoman forces and their tribal supporters. He began his expedition northward on May 31, 1915. Each Iraqi boat contained seven troops. This flotilla was escorted by three large river gunboats and four smaller and faster riverine gunboats. The most demoralizing aspect for the Iraqis were the three biplanes strafing and bombing them. Many had not seen such a device, which led to a retreat that escalated and included a rout of the Ottoman forces. Townshend took Kurna and Amara in this way. He had made his headquarters afloat in one of the larger river gunboats, which allowed him to survey the terrain and make amendments to tactics. Part of his staff included the political officer Percy Cox, later knighted, who was the Arabic linguist and Iraq expert who interfaced with tribes and negotiated surrenders as well as security arrangements for the tribes along the Tigris.

The Ottomans were expecting a ground and river advance and could have fought a delaying action while swinging 2,000 regulars withdrawn from Arabistan to cut off this flotilla from the remaining 15,000 British troops

bringing up the rear. But the heavy concentration of British firepower from canoes, river gunboats, and biplanes simply caused panic. It helped that Ottoman leadership was incompetent and corrupt until the British attempted to take Nasiriyah and the Ottomans began to organize their forces to challenge the British. The Ottomans had dams and obstacles built on the Euphrates River that delayed the British flotilla. The British took Nasiriyah, inflicting two thousand Ottoman casualties and suffering five hundred casualties. A tactical mistake for the British was dividing their forces on the way northward towards Baghdad between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers instead of concentrating their ground, air, and river forces on the Tigris River then making for Kut and Baghdad. The British securing of the Tigris provided for the defense of oil interests across the border in Persia, their main mission. There seemed to be an overeagerness and overconfidence to drive to Baghdad instead of focusing on the original mission of securing Persian oil fields bordering the Ottoman Iraqi domains. Despite the battles of Nasiriyah and Shuaybah, British generals were overconfident by the majority of battles that were easy victories and pressed forward. It is during these battles between April and December 1915 that the Iraqi officers in Ottoman service began splitting between Ottoman loyalists and those yearning for Arab nationalist movements who would defect to the British.

KURNA, AMARA, AND KUT FALL TO GENERAL TOWNSHEND (1915)

The combination of massive Iraqi firepower from the canoes, river gunboats, and planes led the Ottomans to surrender Kurna, Amara, and Kut. In taking Kut, Townshend, in an area called al-Sin, applied the Napoleonic principle of exploiting the weakness of the Ottoman lines. The Ottoman defenses of Kut were split between the left and the right banks of the Tigris. Townshend used his river force to hold one bank as a diversionary attack while his main effort of a division swung wide around to envelop the other bank as the Ottomans were diverted by the British river force thinking an attack would come from the river. The British, though, were experiencing problems: despite heavy Ottoman and Iraqi casualties, the British lost 1,200 in taking Kut. In addition they could not press their attack on fleeing Ottoman regulars for lack of adequate cavalry. The 1,200 were in addition to 500 lost in the Battle of Shuaybah, and hundreds more lost to disease and dysentery.

POWER VACUUMS

As tribes saw the British winning battles, observed the technology of their weapons and the distribution of gold, and heard rumors cultivated and enhanced by the British, they began switching allegiances. Among the most creative instance of disinformation is the use of the thirtieth chapter of the Quran, *al-Rum* (often translated as “the Turks,” but really meaning “the Byzantines”), to spread a rumor that *al-Rum* would be defeated. This defeat was as ordained in the first verse of this chapter of the Quran, which said that God had promised the Arabs victory over the Turks to stoke rebellion. As the Ottoman and British Empires struggled over Iraq, a power vacuum was left in which the towns of Najaf, Karbala, Hilla, and the entire middle Euphrates villages and towns began to rebel against Ottoman authority and attempted to gain autonomy. This led to struggles between townfolk and tribes, as well as between clerics and tribal elders, as to who would control the cities.

Al-Wardi's book offers details of many internal engagements such as that between the Bani Hassan tribe and the Najafi townfolk in a struggle over control of Kufa. Of note, in 1915 Percy Cox was in contact with Sheikh Muhammad Kamuna, one of the leaders of Karbala, and Hajj Atiah Qalal, who represented leaders of Najaf to cultivate their support of Britain in return for autonomy. The British understood the need to disaggregate tribes and Shiites from the Ottomans, to divide them and then support those wanting autonomy.

BATTLE OF SALMAN PAK

The Battle of Salman Pak had an inauspicious beginning for the British. They started to make their way towards Salman Pak in October 1915; Lord Asquith, British prime minister, declared in November that British forces were on the outskirts of Baghdad. This particular battle is a case study in how political pressures have an adverse effect on the progress of a campaign. Throughout October General Nixon and his political adviser Percy Cox were eager to take Baghdad after the multiple defeats of the Ottomans, believing that the taking of this city was as politically significant as the taking of Constantinople had been. General Townshend reconnoitered the defenses around Baghdad and Salman Pak, and merged this information with intelligence gained from the city of Aziziyah that the Ottomans not only were reinforcing this region, but

also were receiving reinforcements from Anatolia (Turkey proper). In addition, the logistical tale of the British would have to extend four hundred miles from Basra with the Tigris receding and water levels dropping. This made riverboat transport and resupply problematic. Townshend insisted that two intact divisions were needed to take and secure Baghdad. General Nixon's (in command) historical role models were Horatio Nelson and Sir Francis Drake. He deluded himself that a few sharp blows would lead to an Ottoman evacuation of Baghdad. He did not have Townshend's Napoleonic eye. The British government was eager for a quick victory in Baghdad to boost morale for the debacle in the Dardanelles and the static war in France.

Salman Pak is 12.5 miles south of Baghdad. The area is named after Prophet Muhammad's companion Salman al-Farisi (the Persian) who was reputed to be Prophet Muhammad's barber, and was nicknamed Salman Pak (the Clean). Col. Nurreidine Bey decided to make a stand against the advancing British and made a defensive line south of Persian ruins of the ancient Sassanid Persian capital Ctesiphon used to house supplies and was easily supplied by river and landward through rail lines from Baghdad. Nurreidine had learned from his previous encounters with the British, particularly the Battle of al-Sin, and laid out careful defenses with trenches laced with razor wire, and kill zones for rifles, machine guns, and artillery. Joining Nurreidine Bey was Gen. Khalil Bey, uncle of the war minister Anwar (Enver) Pasha. Since the Ottomans chose the place of battle, they printed leaflets in Hindi and Urdu, convincing Muslims in the British Army to defect to their brothers in faith, and to remember they were fighting near the grave of Muhammad's companion Salman al-Farisi. This had an impact: the 20th Punjabi Battalion had to be removed from the British formation because one Punjabi soldier killed a British soldier. Townshend had to forbid his troops from uttering the name "Salman Pak" lest they rouse Muslim sentiments within the British ranks. Instead they referred to the area as Ctesiphon, the name for the ancient Sassanid Persian capital and now a set of ruins south of Baghdad.

This would be a fierce battle lasting three days, with the first day going to the British. The final two days, which included hand-to-hand combat, went to the Ottomans. With 4,500 British casualties, Townshend retreated to Kut; the Ottomans, exhausted, had lost 9,500 out of 35,000 troops. In Kut, the Ottomans reorganized their army into two corps and laid siege to Kut. From

December 1915 to April 1916 Townshend and his army were surrounded and finally had to surrender with eight thousand troops. Tribes quickly switched sides and sought to gain from the siege of Kut. It would be less than a year before the British would redeem this humiliation that echoes in the annals of British army history.

CONCLUSION

Inside Kut, the British had to contend with the local population trapped with them that sapped their supplies. The women of Kut were fired upon when attempting to gather water, and not a small number of them were killed. The Ottomans rained artillery on Kut, demoralizing the soldiers and locals alike. T. E. Lawrence, then a junior intelligence officer and before rising to Lawrence of Arabia fame, was dispatched on a special mission to bribe Khalil Pasha to lift the siege. He was authorized to offer £1 million, an astronomical sum in 1916. He worked through the tribes to get word to Khalil Pasha, but the mission was unsuccessful. General Maude would replace General Nixon, as he and several other British flag officers were dismissed over the ongoing Siege of Kut. The British provided adequate troops and supplies and General Nixon retook Kut and pushed into Baghdad in March 1917. By November 1918 Ottoman forces split into three defensive units or fronts along the Tigris, Euphrates, and Diyala, named after Iraq's main rivers, each with a division and attempted to regroup and attack the British and dislodge them from Baghdad. General Maude would not see the end of Iraqi campaign, dying of cholera in November 1918.

There are several recommended English-language books of the World War I Mesopotamian Campaigns, including these:

- Barker, A. J. 1967. *The Neglected War*. London: Faber and Faber Briton Cooper Busch.
- Busch, Briton Cooper. 1971. *Britain, India, and the Arabs 1914–1921*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cato, Conrad. 1917. *The Navy in Mesopotamia, 1914–1917*. London: Constable & Co.
- Moberly, F. J. 1917. *The Campaign in Mesopotamia* (4 vols., 1923–1927, HMSO, official history). London: His Majesty's Stationary Office.

Nunn, Wilfred. 1932 (2007). *Tigris Gunboats: The Forgotten War in Iraq 1914–1917*. Reprint. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press.

Wilcox, Ron. 2006. *Battles on the Tigris*. London: Pen and Sword Military.

What makes al-Wardi's work unique are the details it has on the interactions between the Ottomans and British with the clerics and tribal leaders, and on the intricacies of Iraqi societal structures. What al-Wardi does not do a good job with are the tactical details, the troop numbers, and detailed deployments of forces. In addition, the entire fourth volume contains virtually no maps to follow the battles. He more than makes up for the details with his descriptions of how the Ottomans incited jihad, who they talked to to elicit a joint Shiite and Sunni fatwa, and much more.

5

EVENTS LEADING TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE 1920 REVOLT (1918–1920)

Foreword by Lt. Col. Christopher C. Straub, U.S. Army (Ret.);
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Surely one of the lessons of the past decade is that basic familiarity with the tenets and customs of Islam is an essential prerequisite for involvement in a Middle Eastern country. Familiarity with the key events of regional history, and the way the memory of these events helps Middle Eastern people define themselves, is equally essential.

Many of the hundreds of thousands of Americans who have served in Iraq know that Iraqis have an intense, if sometimes subjective, awareness of their history. The Iraqis, or at least their leaders, have shown in a number of key decisions since 2003 that they are not prisoners of their history; rather, they are consciously building on their historical foundation, with an emphasis on remedying the worst effects of recent history. In addition to providing a foundation, their history helps Iraqis define and orient themselves within their region, nation, and smaller community. The interpretation of past events may vary depending on the region or community to which a particular Iraqi belongs, but his or her sense of history helps shape self-perception. For this reason, the Iraqi understanding of their history is a major element of the human terrain on which counterinsurgency and stability operations are conducted. Historical remembrance can divide Iraqis, whose nation is formed from a number of ethnic groups, faith communities, and

tribes which were deposited along Iraq's rivers and in its northern mountains by successive tides of invasion and imperial struggle. For example, three contrasting recollections of events are at the heart of the unsettled status of Kirkuk. But Iraqis also proudly recall events that unified them, such as the events of the 1920 effort to expel the British. The 1920 revolt, for the first time in the modern era, revealed Iraq's potential to be more than a disparate collection of tribes and sects. Even today, we sometimes get only fleeting glimpses of Iraqis' aspiration for unity, but pride in the events of the early 1920s shows that a desire for "Iraqiness" to trump other loyalties is still there. But how to get the often complicated facts on the 1920 events to the busy leaders and planners who need them? The extraordinary, multivolume classic history of Dr. Ali al-Wardi is typical in its lack of general availability. Enter Commander Aboul-Enein, who has made this key work accessible in a useful summary form, and *Armor* magazine, which has published it. Anyone interested in Iraq should read what follows, and especially those who are serving or will serve again in Iraq.

Commander Aboul-Enein is dedicated to the principle that knowing most about any operational environment means knowing the religious and historical writings that are most important to the population—in this case, a largely Arab population. We may have other opportunities to stabilize countries with unfamiliar cultures and histories. Let's resolve to apply Commander Aboul-Enein's principle from the start.

INTRODUCTION

The 1920 Revolt, also known as the Zaubah Rebellion (named for the region in Iraq where discontent began), is a seminal event in modern Iraqi political history. The 1920 Revolt began in Ramadi and spread throughout Iraq in opposition to the British mandate system imposed upon Iraq at the 1920 San Remo Conference. Dr. Ali al-Wardi's multivolume set devotes two full volumes to just this event. His fifth volume is among the most comprehensive examinations of this Iraqi revolt against British authority from religious, tribal, social, and military vantages. The revolt was an event charged with

emotion, and al-Wardi recognized that books about Iraq's 1920 Revolt are biased in favor of one side or the other. In the 1970s Arab authors commented and wrote on this revolt through the lens of Arab nationalist movements. The United States remains committed to the future development of Iraq. As long as we have forces in Iraq, it is vital we equip America's military personnel with an understanding of the human terrain of Iraq.

Those arguing that the 1920 Revolt was simply a continuation of tribal rebellions to central rule are dismissing the nuances of what caused this revolt and sustained the insurgency against the British. This revolt began in the summer of 1920 and was not contained until the end of 1920, with sporadic outbursts until 1922. Al-Wardi devotes more than eight hundred pages to dissecting the social, tribal, political, and military aspects of this event in his seminal eight-volume work, *Lamahaat Ijtimayiah min Tareekh Iraq al-Hadeeth*, or *Social Glimpses of Iraqi Modern History*. This chapter will assess the first four hundred pages (al-Wardi's Volume 5, Part 1), which focuses on the events leading to the revolt. Chapter 6 will look into the other four hundred pages that focus on how the British ended this revolt through a combination of force and compromises (al-Wardi's Volume 5, Part 2).

Al-Wardi opens with one question to lead into a one thousand-page explanation of the lead-up, the events, and the conclusion of the 1920 Revolt: What caused the British to go from being accepted when they landed in Basra in 1915 and welcomed in 1918 to having a full-scale revolt by 1920? In 1918 many Iraqis welcomed British occupation for many reasons—chiefly to escape Ottoman oppression, and to end being in the crossfire between Ottoman and British forces. Iraqis resigned themselves to a saying of the period from 1918 to 1920: “May infidelity remain as long as injustice flees.” Al-Wardi's question is an attempt to explore why it took two years (1918 to 1920) for the British to isolate a significant part of the Iraqi population: Kurds, Shiites, and Sunnis.

Some of the societal issues that began the erosion of British authority were their granting of privileges to those on the fringes of Iraqi society. Examples include using Arab and non-Arab bullies, street toughs, and brigands to police the streets. The amount of money that flooded into Iraq to maintain British forces led to high prices for commodities and rents. This in turn led to a vicious competition among Iraqis for access to British funds. The British took a tribal policy that was opposite from that of the Ottomans, choosing to

unify tribes under one British-appointed official versus the Turkish policy of dividing tribes and clans in order to rule them. The British chose a tribal elder and made him responsible for an area of Iraq. The British were attempting to mirror their methods of subjugating Baloch tribes in what is now South Pakistan. This strategy had a short-term result of providing immediate chains of command and subduing large swaths of Iraq, but slowly the British were seen as part of the tribe, clan, and subclan in areas they chose to police, and as tribal backers of those they appointed. Incredibly, the British mirror-imaged tribal succession used in the British monarchy from father to son or from brother to brother instead of being sensitive to the tribal consensus used to select a tribal elder. By tradition, the tribes convened and through consensus selected a leader who was deemed best qualified to lead. The mechanics of the 1920 Revolt were sustained partly by tribes seeking to avenge themselves on tribes close to the British. Privileged tribes used their ties to the British to tax and lord over other tribes. Another problem was British insensitivity to Iraq's customs. One example was that the British officers allowed their dogs into the tent of Bedouins. The dog, although used for hunting, guarding, and herding in Iraq, is considered too unclean to bring into the home. Also, face and personal dignity were affronted, such as when a British officer or official refused to look up from his paperwork and desk while addressing an Iraqi.

SYRIA, EGYPT, AND IRAQ'S *EFFENDIAH* CLASS: REVOLUTION IN THE AIR

Al-Wardi discusses the *effendiah* class, former Ottoman bureaucrats who hung out in coffee shops and small shops sowing dissent. Iraqis first learned of Napoleon, the French Revolution, European Nationalism, and much more through these bureaucrats who had been trained in Turkey. Poets wrote anti-British odes in 1919 and 1920, introducing the Iraqi populace to the eviction of Feisal bin Hussein (of the Hashemite Dynasty) of Syria by French forces in the Battle of Maysalun. Prince Feisal declared himself king of Syria in 1918 and was forcibly removed by the French in 1920; this event in Syria will be covered in a future section of al-Wardi's books. Then as today one cannot divorce the nationalist dissent in Syria from the same dissent in Iraq. In 1918 Prince Feisal ibn Hussein of the Hashemite Dynasty proclaimed Arab

independence in Syria and made himself king of Syria; many within Feisal's entourage were Iraqi officers who created cells and independence movements within Iraq. For instance, they created the al-Ahd (the Pact) Society in Syria, and its first outside branch in Mosul. Another external factor that provided momentum to Iraqis seeking outright independence was the 1919 Revolt in Egypt. This revolt engulfed Egypt in rebellion for a week, and was stimulated by the British arresting Egyptian nationalist Saad Zaghlul and members of a delegation that was making its way to Versailles to seek Egyptian self-determination. That revolt eventually led to quasi-independence for Egypt in 1922. As a reaction to events in Syria, with King Feisal declaring himself as Syria's ruler in 1918, and the 1919 Egyptian agitation for self-rule, Iraqis seized the opportunity to declare their own independence in March 1920. Those Iraqis called upon Feisal's brother Abdullah to assume the kingship of Iraq. These spontaneous declarations of independence in Syria and Iraq, as well as Egypt's attempt to attain self-rule, posed serious challenges to agreements between Britain and France to divide Arab Ottoman dominions into spheres of influence.

IMPACT OF TURKISH INDEPENDENCE ON IRAQ

In Turkey the Ottoman forces rallied around Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), who began his defeat of French, Italian, and Greek forces in Anatolia in 1922, and declared the formation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. Atatürk's earliest policy was to reverse Ottoman policy of considering Arab nationalist movements as treasonous and to support these efforts to undermine British and French influence in the Middle East. British intelligence detected Turkish and Arab nationalist groups coalescing in Karbala and Najaf, attempting to form a common insurgency against British forces in Iraq. The Germans during World War I conducted robust clandestine efforts in Persia to incite calls for jihad against the British and French. This Persian animosity stoked by the Germans against the British would remain beyond World War I; support for insurgents would come not only from Syria and Turkey, but also from Persia. Of note, Russian Bolshevism replaced the Germans in continuing anti-British propaganda in Persia and Turkey. The Bolsheviks aided the Turkish Kemalists (named after Kemal Atatürk) in their efforts to undermine British

and French influence in the Middle East. Moscow spread anti-Western leaflets and reading materials in Iraq, Syria, and the Hijaz. Persian pilgrims to Najaf and Karbala, as well as Persian students to these Shiite seminaries, took Marxist ideology and literature into Iraq. In these Shiite cities of southern Iraq one could find booklets entitled, "The Fundamentals of Bolshevism" printed by an Aleppo press in Syria. So successful was Russian propaganda that Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Taqi Shirazi, who would be a key figure in the 1920 Revolt, would in 1919 call Bolshevism "a friend of Islam." The first Bolshevik Society was established in Iraq in 1920 and as early as 1919 Marxist rhetoric began to appear in Iraq's newspapers. British security officials looked with concern as Arab and Turkish nationalists comingled with Bolshevik agents to plan challenges to Britain's control of Iraq. Among the news circulating was the 1920 Communist eviction of British forces from the oil city of Baku and from port towns in the Caspian. If the British could show weakness in the face of Bolshevism, they would show weakness if challenged through Arab nationalism. What makes al-Wardi's volumes unique is his ability to re-create the ideological strands that lead the reader to the sources of Iraq's major conflicts. He marinates the reader in the mindset of the streets of Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra. This is the type of understanding of human terrain necessary for any force operating in Iraq to this day. Ignore it at your peril.

MOSUL TO SYRIA NATIONALIST PIPELINE

The city of Mosul maintains an important place in Iraq's nationalist politics. According to al-Wardi, it contained many unemployed Ottoman bureaucrats as well as a saturation of schools left by the Ottomans. Mosul is strategically and geographically close to both Turkey and Syria. In 1919 many of Prince Feisal's entourage were not just Iraqis, but Iraqis from Mosul. These officers stayed with Feisal in Syria, and had tribal and family connections in Mosul. Al-Ahd, a secret society dedicated to Syrian independence, established its first external branch in Mosul. This branch would make connections and garner members, connecting Damascus and Baghdad revolutionaries. Mosul ideologically intersected Turkish, Syrian, Iraqi, and Arab Nationalist cells, as well as Bolshevism; all these hated the British. In addition, demobilized Ottoman officers and soldiers of Iraqi origin began arriving in Mosul and started agitating and organizing nationalist cells.

Sir Percy Cox, chief political officer for the Indian Expeditionary Forces in Iraq, and British liaison officer to the British Arab Bureau in Cairo, Gertrude Bell, were cognizant of some of these anti-British efforts and debated such ideas as placing one of the sons of Sherief Hussein ibn Ali of Mecca, in whose name the Arab Revolt was conducted, as ruler of a British-mandated Iraq. Al-Wardi assesses not only external influence leading to the 1920 Revolt, but also internal issues that may have contributed to the event, including the replacement of General McMunn with General Haldane in 1919. The new general in chief in Iraq loathed his diplomatic counterpart, British high commissioner Arnold T. Wilson. Haldane did not take an interest in political reports, met only a few of Iraq's political and religious leaders, and did not study or benefit from the experience of his predecessors. He spent months vacationing with his staff in the mountain resorts of Persia, leaving behind no command authority. Haldane viewed the 1920 Revolt when it broke out as a minor tribal revolt. In fact, when the revolt began General Haldane was spending the summer in Persia. Another internal dynamic was the changing of leadership within the Shiites from Grand Ayatollah Karim al-Yazdi, who died in 1919 and who had enjoyed good relations with British authorities, to Mohammed Taqi Shirazi, who detested British interference in Iraq's internal affairs. Despite several attempts by British High Commissioner Wilson to call on Shirazi, each visit was met with frustration, as the grand ayatollah while polite never acceded to Wilson's demands and did not cooperate with the British as his predecessor Yazdi had.

LONDON ATTEMPTS TO ADDRESS IRAQI RULE THROUGH A PLEBISCITE

In discussions between Bell, Wilson, and officials in London, the British decided to put the question of Iraqi rule to its tribal, religious, and city notables within Iraq's major urban centers. London wanted to pose the following questions to the Iraqi leaders:

1. Do Iraqis wish to have an Arab entity that would extend from Mosul to the northern Persian Gulf around Basra?
2. Do Iraqis desire an Arab leader to rule this Arab independent entity?
3. If Iraqis want an Arab leader, who should this leader be?

Wilson took this question to notables within the then-nine regions into which Iraq was subdivided. The British positioned the equivalent of an army major in each of these nine regions. I will highlight only three of the major centers that are discussed in al-Wardi's book.

Najaf: Wilson flew down to Najaf and met with Grand Ayatollah Yazdi.

The grand ayatollah indicated to Shiite leaders that he was apolitical, but advised Shiite representatives to do what is best for Muslims when they make their decisions about these questions. In Najaf twenty-one leaders opted for direct British rule and ten opted for Arab independence.

Karbala: In Karbala leaders resented all three questions posed by the British, and some split proposing that a member of the deposed Ottoman ruling family be made ruler. Shiites proposed that a member of the Qajar Persian royal family be made ruler. The majority in Karbala picked Abdullah or Zaid ibn Hussein of the Hashemites of Mecca to rule Iraq. In Kazimiyah with pro-Ottoman agitators present, one the notables of that city voted for Arab self-rule, and a leader from the Hashemites left open the question of which son of Hussein ibn Ali should rule.

Baghdad: Wilson considered Baghdad the driving force behind Iraq; where they voted the rest of Mesopotamia would go. Baghdad was the center of anti-British activity. It had thirty-two Sunni and twenty-four Shiite representatives to cast their vote on these questions. The majority voted for Arab independence for Iraq, extending from Mosul to the northern Persian Gulf; they also voted that the sherief of Mecca would rule as king over an Arab dominion that would encompass the Hijaz, Syria, and Iraq. Iraq would be directly ruled by a son of the sherief of Mecca, as would Syria. Jewish and Christian minorities petitioned Wilson for direct British rule or a construct like Egypt, which was a British protectorate.

1919: A PIVOTAL YEAR IN IRAQI POLITICAL HISTORY

The year 1919 was an important milestone in modern Iraqi political history. It marked the first time Iraqi leaders were even asked what type of govern-

ment they desired and which ruler they favored. A minority of Iraqis expressed the desire for direct British rule, thinking these very questions on Arab self-government were a loyalty test by the British, designed to expose dissent that later was eliminated. After 1919 a host of Iraqi and Syrian nationalist groups coalesced into two major national fronts in Baghdad. One was Haras al-Istiqlal (Guardians of Independence) and the other was al-Ahd. The latter was first established in Damascus, branched into Mosul, and evolved a second large branch in Baghdad. Haras al-Istiqlal and al-Ahd split over the issue of accepting British economic, technical, and military aid for an independent Iraq. Haras al-Istiqlal asserted that accepting British aid was tantamount to accepting British rule, and that such aid should come from another European power. In 1919 Iraq's leaders in Baghdad reopened middle and high schools that had been closed since the Ottomans withdrew from Iraq in 1918. The schools became a hotbed for political activity and involved the youth groups Haras al-Istiqlal (Guardians of Independence) which evolved into a quasi-militia. Nationalist reading groups were developed from within these schools to educate a new generation of literate Iraqis in European Nationalism, Revolution, and the tactics of rebellion. By 1920 cells had been organized from Baghdad, to Karbala, to the middle Euphrates region.

1920 SAN REMO CONFERENCE, AND IGNORING THE IRAQI PLEBISCITE

On April 25, 1920, details of the San Remo Conference were made public. This hastily organized session was designed to address the final details of the Versailles Conference such as the disposition of Ottoman Arab dominions. It was here the decision was made to make Iraq and Palestine British mandates and Syria and Lebanon French mandates. Wilson was left to manage the Iraqi population. He issued a public announcement, telling Iraqis that the British had been more just and efficient than the Ottomans, and that signs of progress had been self-evident within Iraq over the past two years, to include safety and the rule of law that the Ottomans failed to provide, according to British high commissioner in Iraq. Wilson further explained that a mandate was to place Iraq towards a path of self-determination to be assessed at a future date. Many Iraqis viewed the mandate in the words of newspapers of the period as “children needing guardians for our affairs.” The imposition of a British mandate

over Iraq would do much to increase the pace of Iraqi and Arab nationalist movements.

RELIGION AND NATIONALISM COMMINGLE IN IRAQ

Similar to Baghdad, Karbala in 1919 would see the emergence of a nationalist group that would mix Islam and Arab nationalism. Mirza Mohammed Rida created a secret society called the Islamic Group. Its goals were a rejection of British occupation, immediate independence, and the selection of a Muslim ruler in Iraq. The group was to receive a fatwa from Grand Ayatollah Shirazi that a Muslim cannot select a non-Muslim to rule over Muslims. The fatwa was endorsed by seventeen other clerics and distributed throughout the middle Euphrates region. In Karbala were the earliest instances of religion and nationalism comingling, with such slogans as "Love of nation is a religious duty."

Twenty days after the issuance of the fatwa Grand Ayatollah Shirazi sent a letter to President Woodrow Wilson through the American minister in Persia. The letter, dated February 1919, outlined the desire of Iraqis to move towards self-determination and independence from British rule. Shirazi then issued a fatwa that prohibited Muslims from seeking employment or working for British authorities. The British responded to Shirazi's letter to Wilson and fatwa by empowering a willing Shiite leader, Mirza Muhammad Bushehri, in Karbala as a mayor and civic leader to rival Shirazi. The British backed their leader by offering public welfare projects such as regular running water, electricity, schools for girls, and English-language schools to stem the tide of anti-British sentiment. It concerned British officials that Shiite centers like Karbala were taking on an anti-British sentiment that was increasingly religious in tone.

The British failed to appreciate the human terrain of the middle Euphrates River culture within Iraq; this region was Iraq's second access point after the ports of Basra and Umm Qasr, and was where Iraq was accessed landward from the Levant, Egypt, and Arabia. This area contained fiercely independent tribes in which tribal culture and loyalty added a further layer of complexity in social relationships. It is also the heart of Shiism, with the city of Kufa being the place in which Ali was assassinated, and the city of Karbala being where Hussein was ambushed. During the Mongol invasions al-Hilla became the center of Shiism before that center was moved to Najaf. A little-known challenge to governing the middle Euphrates was that the British, through massive

irrigation projects, changed the course of Euphrates River tributaries, leading tribes to resettle land to be closer to the water; resultant conflicts over arable land led to tribal warfare.

Among the main sources of regular income in the middle Euphrates was the growing of rice. This so enriched the landowners that they had time for discussions of political affairs and engaging in the support of nationalist causes. An institution that kept tribes at peace was that of *sadah* (singular sayyid), or leaders. *Sadah* were a mix of religious leader and landed gentry within Iraqi Shiism; some *sadah* claimed that they descended from Prophet Muhammad and those related to the Prophet were called upon to arbitrate between tribes in Iraq as they had done for centuries. The *sadah* played an important role in inciting jihad against British forces in the 1920 Revolt.

SEEDS OF THE 1920 REVOLT

The seeds of the 1920 Revolt are lost to history, but the village of Abi Sukhair in the middle Euphrates is considered where the revolt was born. The instigating event involved the British Army captain Lyle and his insult of Sayyid Alwan al-Yasri (hereafter Alwan) by throwing Alwan out of his office one day in late 1919. Being unable to have an outlet to bring village grievances and after being insulted by the British authorities, Alwan began to call for armed rebellion.

The Yasri family were the *sadah* of the region of Iraq and were interlocutors between the tribes, so the actions of Captain Lyle would slowly blow up into a conflagration. Alwan's cousin was the even more powerful Sayyid Noor al-Yasri, who preached jihad against the unjust British. Now because of intermarriage and alliances of the Yasri, the powerful al-Ibrahim tribe was offended and brought in a neighboring tribal confederacy, al-Fatlah. This al-Fatlah tribe was upset by the British policy of supporting the older son of the former leader of the al-Fatlah versus the son's uncle, the agreed-upon leader by tribal consensus. These two tribes took their grievances to the Shalash tribe in Najaf and petitioned the king of the Hijaz and sherief of Mecca. King Hussein ibn Ali was reminded in these petitions of their desire to be governed by one of his sons, and that the British were delaying these desires.

Talk of revolution was prevalent, and in April 1920 there was growing tribal discontent. There were grievances with the British, and the tribes be-

lieved that the British were delaying the installation of Arab rule, and finally the announcement of the British mandate over Iraq led to a secret conference in Najaf to discuss rebellion. The meeting affirmed the establishment of the Islamic Group, unity, and acceptance of Iraqis who were anti-British under the new organization, the Islamic Group; its leader was Grand Ayatollah Shirazi. Fridays (the Muslim Sabbath) would be a day of strike to begin nonviolent resistance in Baghdad, Kazimiyah, and Najaf. Of note, Grand Ayatollah Shirazi was against rebelling against the British due to his fear that the tribes would suffer massive casualties in any conflict. Also, he knew he would be bullied by the tribesmen. Seeing that they intended to rebel and engage in resistance the grand ayatollah simply said, "If this is your intention, you are unified in consensus, then may God aid you."

EVENTS OF DEIR ZUR

Deir Zur is a town located in the northern Euphrates region between Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. It is towns like Deir Zur and Albu Kamal that posed problems in defining the edges between Syria and what evolved into the modern Iraqi state. The Ottoman withdrawal in 1918 left an administrative void that would be filled by merchants and tribal elders, enforcing tribal law in place of nonexistent civil government. Such was the case in towns like Deir Zur and Albu Kamal, which at that time existed between the British mandate in Iraq and the French mandate in Syria. Upon hearing of the Arab Revolt under Prince Feisal declaring independence in Syria, the villagers wrote to the Hashemite ruler asking their towns to fall under Syria. The Hashemite authority in Syria sent Marahi Pasha as their representative to the British high commissioner in Iraq. After a few months, the townsfolk of Deir Zur grew dissatisfied with Marahi Pasha and lamented neighboring towns under British control receiving money, technical support, health care, and functioning administrative governance, while they had nothing. The town elders convened a secret meeting and, without the knowledge of Marahi Pasha, sent a request to the British of their desire for their towns to be part of Iraq. Marahi Pasha found out about the request when a British armored unit arrived to take control of the towns of Deir Zur and Albu Kamal. He asked Shukri Pasha in Aleppo for guidance, which was to surrender the town to the British until its status was

resolved through the Versailles Conference. Of note, the British had brought with them technicians, civil servants, and administrators with the armored unit, immediately setting about establishing a functioning municipal government.

SYRIA SUPPORTS IRAQI INSURRECTION IN DEIR ZUR

In the summer of 1919, Iraqi members of the Damascus-based al-Ahd (first a secret society, and now an open political party) decided they would regain control of Deir Zur and succeed in getting Ramadan Shalash appointed military governor of al-Riqa, the closest village under Syria to Deir Zur. His prime mission was to sow anti-British dissent among the tribes; how much Prince Feisal knew of this objective or plans is unknown. Likely to maintain plausible deniability, Shalash was an excellent choice for this assignment. He was an Iraqi from the Albu Sarai tribe who had attended the Ottoman school for tribal administration. He began by shaming tribal leaders who opted for British administration, citing them as non-Muslims ruling over Muslims. He found schisms between the tribes, with those who believed the British were empowering clans at the expense of other clans, and tribe at the expense of other tribes. He collected these discontented tribes who believed they were not benefiting from the British order to form a force of five hundred Bedouins and raided Deir Zur in December 1919. The British forces in the village withdrew in the garrison, finally surrendered, and were taken hostage.

The quick capture of Deir Zur led tribal loyalties to switch towards Shalash; with this momentum he decided to raid the town of Albu Kamal, located along the undefined Syrian-Iraq border. Prince Feisal sent a cable from Versailles, where he was negotiating, saying the breakdown in stability along the Syrian-Iraq frontier could jeopardize negotiations there. Prince Feisal informed the British general staff in London that the Arab Revolt had nothing to do with these events. On December 23, 1919, British planes dropped leaflets with Prince Feisal's cable to Prince Zeid denouncing Ramadan Shalash, and warned that aerial bombing would commence if British hostages were not released in forty-eight hours. The threat worked and the hostages were released. Shalash remained in control of Deir Zur and Albu Kamal until he was replaced by Maolood Mukhlis in 1920. Mukhlis would make his mission in spreading tribal insurrection and opposing the terms of the Versailles Treaty,

demarking the Habor River as the northern border between Syria and Iraq. British forces set about retaking Deir Zur and Albu Kamal. Mukhlis declared a jihad to resist these efforts and organized tribal levies, regular forces, and more than three hundred Iraqi regulars in the former Ottoman service that trickled in from Syria to participate in jihad. General Haldane sent a letter to Mukhlis threatening aerial assaults if tribal attacks did not cease. Mukhlis wrote appeals to jihad in Damascus and Aleppo. Answering the call for jihad was the former military governor Ramadan Shalash; both he and Mukhlis had strong personalities and fought incessantly with one another.

In Cairo, Gen. Edmund Allenby, commander in chief of British forces in the Middle East, received a note from Prince Feisal telling him urgently that the situation in the undefined border between Syria and Iraq was spiraling out of control. Tribes were divided along the borders demarcated by the Versailles Treaty, and San Remo Conference and it was proposed by the British that a joint Anglo-Arab border delegation be created to reconcile these tribal splits and to redraw the border. Allenby agreed to the proposal and that Albu Kamal and Deir Zur would go to Syria. Of note, Prince Feisal could not control tribes of the northern and middle Euphrates or those tribes who demobilized from the Arab Revolt who were continuing the tactic of raiding trains. British military logistical trains were attacked along the Mosul to Tikrit line; there was damage to the trains and rail line. The momentum of tribal raids along the northern and middle Euphrates would lead to the Arab takeover of the entire region of Tel Afar, and would trigger a British retaliatory response. An Iraqi adviser to British general Haldane warned, "If you do not assert authority in Deir Zur and Albu Kamal the tribes will be emboldened and you will face a fully fledged revolt in six months."

On March 8, 1920, hundreds of Iraqi regular officers and troops who previously had been in the service of Ottoman forces and who had answered the call of the sherief of Mecca and fought the Ottomans for Arab self-determination in the Arab Revolt grew disenchanted with French and British designs to carve out the Middle East into mandates. On that day, they approached Prince Feisal, by then the self-proclaimed king of Syria from 1918 to 1920, and expressed their dissatisfaction with the outcome of the Arab Revolt. They opted to leave Prince Feisal and answer the call for jihad in Iraq, fighting the British in Deir Zur. The group of Iraqi officers informed King

Feisal that the Turks and Bolsheviks were ready to support any and all anti-colonial nationalist groups. Feisal drew £3,000 (each gold pound the size and value of a \$5 gold piece) to provide to the group as mustering-out pay. The Iraqis raided an arsenal of King Feisal, helping themselves to weapons, then proceeded on to the Turkish border with Iraq to pick up hundreds of crates of ammo and guns, machine guns, and grenades before heading towards Deir Zur. Events spiraled out of control; the British soon realized they had underestimated what they had called “tribal mischief” and that it had become a fully fledged national liberation army.

REVOLT IN TEL AFAR

Abdul-Hamid al-Dabooni served as assistant political officer to British forces in Tel Afar. He was gruffly treated by British officers who questioned his loyalty; in response, he resigned in disgust and departed for Deir Zur. Al-Dabooni offered Malood Mukhlis a treasure trove of human intelligence on the British in the city of Tel Afar. He discussed British positions, defenses, and the personalities of the officers. He also provided information on spies within the Iraqi nationalist camp and convinced leaders of this growing anti-British resistance movement that Tel Afar could easily be taken. Learning of the amassing of forces in Deir Zur, the British took up the matter with Feisal ibn Hussein of the Hashemite Dynasty. The newly proclaimed king of Syria summoned representatives of the resistance movement at Deir Zur and was told it would be impossible to reverse the momentum of armed insurrection against the British in Iraq. Feisal asked that his relationship with the British not be compromised, and that field guns not be used lest it betray Syrian collusion. The king was naïve, and the momentum created by the Arab Revolt against the Ottomans, that swept him from Arabia into Damascus and guarded the British right flank as they made their way from Egypt to Palestine to Syria to crush the 4th Ottoman Army in 1918, would be betrayed as the Hashemites became pawns in the greater game of French and British power politics.

The move on Tel Afar began not by assault, but by sending al-Dabooni into town to negotiate and incite a rebellion from within. He discussed the amassing of the Sherifian Army of Liberation on the outskirts of Tel Afar, and convinced the leader of the Saada tribe that all honor and glory would go to them if they led an internal assault on the paltry British presence in Tel

Afar. The tribal leader consulted with an Iraqi leader of police in Tel Afar; al-Dabooni convinced them both to rebel and participate in the revolution. The British had three regular soldiers and seventy Iraqi levies, and the British major in charge was aided by an Iraqi lieutenant. As the tribes attacked, they withdrew into their fortress and fired machine guns, ceding the town to the internal tribes and townspeople that revolted. When a tribal leader was killed, the British major who had been captured outside the fortress was killed in retaliation. Al-Dabooni was in a precarious position, having promised the arrival of the Sherifian Army of Liberation. The leaders of the internal revolt suspected al-Dabooni had tricked them into rebelling and that they would now bear the brunt of British vengeance. This concern was reinforced by British planes and armored vehicles approaching Tel Afar (three armored cars and several troop carriers with Indian infantry). Barricades were set up around Tel Afar and rebels poured withering fire on this British relief force. When an armored car made it past the barricade and into Tel Afar making its way to the fort, women on rooftops dropped rocks on it and rebels dropped grenades on it. These actions led to the capture of Indian soldiers. In one instance an Indian soldier, fearing capture by the Iraqis, poured gasoline on himself and set himself alight. Self-immolation had never been seen before by Iraqis, who witnessed it with amazement. One armored car made a hasty retreat and was pursued by tribesmen on horseback, who attempted to mount the car, killing one occupant. Upon pursuit the car became disabled and all four soldiers made a last stand firing into the approaching mounted tribal fighters. Of note, the fortress was taken when the Iraqi police forces known as al-Dirk turned against the British, taking them hostage and opening the fortress to rebel forces. The Sherifian Army of Liberation arrived in Tel Afar on June 4, 1920.

ATTEMPTS ON THE CITY OF MOSUL

In Mosul, word of the fall of Tel Afar caused British authorities led by a colonel to reinforce defenses, impose a curfew, and demand the surrender of all weapons, to include swords and daggers, to security forces. Mosul was then surrounded by barbed wire and checkpoints set up on key access points of the city. Tribes emboldened by events in Tel Afar began joining the Arab Nationalist Revolt for a chance at gaining spoils, and Iraqi tribes attacked British con-

voys leading to Mosul from the north and west. Tribes raided British armories and remote offices. Tribes and regular Iraqi forces led by Jameel al-Midfai made their way to the outskirts of Mosul on June 7, 1920. It was estimated that more than one thousand regular and irregular forces attacked the village of Abu Qadur, which is on the road to Mosul. The British made a stand at Abu Qadur, firing a concentration of artillery on the waves of horse-mounted attackers. Fighting an offensive battle in open terrain with the British this time defending with artillery, reinforced with two biplanes that dropped bombs and strafed tribes with machine-gun fire, caused panic and fear among the irregular tribal forces, leading them to retreat. British planes pursued the retreating army all the way to Tel Afar, dropping bombs on them. The harassment of Tel Afar with British planes led to general panic inside the city, with civilians leaving for Turkey and Syria. On June 9 British forces entered Tel Afar and took the city with minimal resistance, and set about dynamiting the homes of known rebel leaders. They allowed three days of looting to commence before they restored order. The British granted amnesty to the villagers, except those known to have killed British forces.

Events in Tel Afar are critical to understanding this region: to the Iraqis this land has historic meaning, and is where those who made a stand against the British mandate of Iraq and who died are buried. These are not merely points on the map; the hills, forts, and terrain have meaning to residents of this northern Iraqi city. Starting in 2003 insurgents used Tel Afar as staging points for attacks against U.S. forces that led to Operation Black Typhoon with the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division in 2004 and Operation Restoring Rights involving the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment in 2005. The city was mentioned by the late Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, leader of al-Qaida in Iraq, in December 2005. He falsely accused American forces of using chemical weapons, probably as a means of saving face as U.S. and Iraqi forces pressured the insurgents.

RAMADAN INCIDENTS IN BAGHDAD

Baghdad is unique in Iraq's social history. Aside from being Iraq's political center, it has experienced sectarian flare-ups between Sunni and Shiite Muslims since the Abbasid caliphate (750–1258 CE). The leaders of the 1920

Revolt understood that any nationalist movement must overcome this sectarianism, even if just temporarily. Al-Wardi highlights the methods taken to achieve this merger of Sunnis and Shiites against the British. Ironically it was coordinating labor strikes that led to the proposal of merging the Shiite religious observance of Ashoura with the Sunni religious observance of Prophet Muhammad's birthday as a means of increasing participation in mass strikes protesting British rule. Saaleh al-Hilli came up with this idea, and added that the British would be reluctant to intervene in a strike cloaked in religious observances. (Of note, America's Continental Congress undertook a similar tactic by declaring a day of fasting and prayer to protest British oppression in July 1775.) In the realm of civil disobedience, getting British authorities to react was a tactical victory, and this reaction came with the British detention of a group of popular Iraqi poets. Haras al-Istiqlal organized anti-British demonstrations. They soon became riots, which resulted in Iraq's first national martyr, a man whose name is not mentioned in al-Wardi's work except that he was from the Akhras family. He would be Baghdad's first martyr opposing the British. The Iraqi nationalists organized a funeral procession that included anti-British protests that led the British authorities to monitor the procession using cavalry and air support. British officials called in known instigators and agitators in Baghdad, verbally abusing them and threatening them and their families with exile.

GRAND AYATOLLAH SHIRAZI'S MESSAGE

Ardent nationalist leader and Shiite Jafar Abu Timen wrote to Grand Ayatollah Shirazi, leader of the Najaf Marjaiah (clerical cluster), equivalent to Grand Ayatollah Sistani today, appealing to the Shiite notion of speaking out against oppression and injustice. The appeal worked, and Shirazi wrote a letter urging cooperation with Iraq's nationalists in the noble project of Iraqi independence, and the establishment of an Islamic government. He wrote that all Iraqis must set aside sectarian differences and come together in this grand undertaking. His letter was mass-printed and distributed throughout Iraq. One can argue that this seminal document placed Iraq towards a path of independence because it provided the ability of Iraq's nationalists to unify and submit a list of common demands to the British high commissioner in Iraq, A. T. Wilson, that called for the immediate

- formation of an Iraqi congress representing Iraq's people to determine the fate of the nation;
- freedom of the press to express all of Iraq's points of view; and
- lifting of mail and telegraph censorship to allow for the free exchange of views on how to establish and create an independent Iraq.

Wilson responded by lifting restrictions on Shiite and Sunni religious observances and offered to discuss Iraqi participation on the municipal level only.

Another event that exacerbated tensions and was used by Iraqi nationalists during the 1920 Revolt was the detention of Grand Ayatollah Shirazi's son Muhammad Rida, who was a well-connected Iraqi revolutionary. Rida advocated replicating the Arab Revolt of Arabia (1916) that had evicted the Ottomans from Arabia. He believed he could do the same in Iraq against the British. He had connections with anti-British secret societies in Syria, and lobbied for Shiite clerical participation in Iraq's nationalist movement. The British incarcerated him, which led not only to Shiite outrage, but also to the Sunnis capitalizing on this to show solidarity with their Shiite brothers. In addition, his arrest led to Persia making diplomatic overtures to Britain to secure the release of Rida. Rida remained incarcerated for months; his father Grand Ayatollah Shirazi capitalized on his son's incarceration by playing up the sacrifices he was making for Iraqi independence by his son being detained in prison. The British asserted and ran a counterpropaganda campaign claiming that they had brought order, rule of law, efficient rail, telegraph, and freedom from tribal chaos. This campaign was unsuccessful, though, because they did not address the long-term issue of the future of Iraq's governance. Had the British seized the moment and entered into negotiations over gradual independence, the 1920 Revolt might never have taken place. Instead, their insistence at maintaining a colony in name through the fiction of a mandate system with no clear end led to the spark that ignited the revolt; anti-British agitation would continue to be a permanent fixture of Iraqi politics until the declaration of a republic in 1958.

POLITICS OR TRIBAL INSULT: THE SPARK OF THE 1920 REVOLT
The British obsession with rule of law led to an incident. Chief Shaalan Abu Joun owed the British 800 rupees. He entered the garrison at Rumaytha to

settle the issue and was handled roughly by British authorities. Chief Shaalan was leader of the Zuwailem tribe, and he warned British officers in Rumaytha, "Your policy will drag Britain into much animosity, know that you are in Iraq and not Hindustan, [and] Iraqis are not Indians." A nationalist-coordinated raid on Rumaytha occurred, but the British blamed it on the tribes, chiefly the Albu Hassan and Zuwailem tribes, which were struck by a British force without warning in July 1920 for their roles in harassing British military convoys and looting. This only unified the Zuwailem and Albu Hassan, who conducted a mass raid on Rumaytha, overwhelming the British.

In August 1920 General in Chief Haldane cut short his Persian summer vacation and ordered the redeployment of forces, ordering one division to Diwaniyah to deal with this tribal chaos. British troops inside the fort of Rumaytha were resupplied by aerial drops; they then planned an aerial bombardment of the town of Rumaytha to allow the British trapped inside the fort to escape while the populace and tribal forces were taking cover. Iraqi nationalists planned to use the British aerial strafing and bombing of Rumaytha and the casualties generated as a massacre to be avenged, similar to the North American colonists propagandizing the 1770 Boston Massacre. Village leaders in Rumaytha contacted both the British and Iraqi nationalists to spare them from British aerial bombing.

Sayyid Muhammad, the designated representative from Rumaytha, carried the nationalist demands to the British commander in Diwaniyah. Those demands were for the withdrawal of British forces and immediate independence for Iraq. The British commander took the demands, threw them on the ground, and stomped on them. He then moved part of his British division towards Rumaytha following the known train route from Diwaniyah to Rumaytha. In the outskirts of Rumaytha he was met by 5,700 tribal fighters; he defeated the tribes in the Battle of Ahrdiyaat on July 19, 1920.

The problem with nationalist and tribal insurgencies is not winning one battle, because even then the harassment continues. What the British overlooked in the battle of Ahrdiyaat was that the tribal fighters were now made up not only of the Albu Hassan and Zuwailem, but also the Bani Zareej, Bani Arid, and Ahajeeb, along with Ottoman military advisers and former Iraqi officers who were in the Ottoman service or in the Arab Revolt. Two weeks after the battle, tribal raids continued daily, with casualties mainly on the Arab

side mounting, leading Grand Ayatollah Shirazi to call for a cease-fire to be brokered between Iraqis and the British through the Persians. A. T. Wilson rejected this proposal, remembering Shirazi's inflamed letter calling for insurrection, and believing that the Iraqis' need to enter into negotiations must mean British tactics were working. This British failure to understand Iraq's need for self-determination and resentment of the mandate led to flare-ups in other parts of Iraq. In the town of Abu Sukhair, a siege of British security forces was conducted by the Ala' Fatla, Ghazalat, Ala' Shibl, and Ala' Ibrahim tribes. What distinguishes this siege were attacks on British logistical boats and armed riverboats such as HMS *Firefly*. On July 17 a four-day cease-fire was negotiated. Among the demands was the formation of an Iraqi governing council and the release of prisoners, to include Grand Ayatollah Shirazi's son. These demands were ignored, and hostilities continued, with the Albu Hassan tribe taking the town of al-Kifl on July 22.

The British realized that if their outposts, villages, and train depots fell to these rebellious tribes who were aided by nationalists confidence would be breathed into the nationalists and lead to more tribes joining the insurrection in search for spoils. During the ambush at Rarnjiah a British regiment on its way to al-Kifl and al-Hilla was ambushed as the men rested for the night. The rebellious tribes aided by nationalists took fifty-two machine guns, an 18-pound artillery piece, and caused four hundred casualties. This ambush would be a turning point in this growing revolt and lead to revolts east of Diwaniyah and attacks on trains by the Ufuk and Aqr'aa tribes, cutting off communications links to Diwaniyah.

The British commander withdrew his forces from Diwaniyah to al-Hilla, using only six engines and 251 rail cars. His withdrawal extended for miles and he made only eight miles a day with tribes attempting to harass the rail column as they were beaten back by aerial escort that strafed and bombed them. The tribes foolishly attempted to raid al-Hilla, but it was heavily defended and they suffered a crushing defeat.

AL-WARDI'S OBSERVATIONS ON BRITISH AND IRAQI STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Al-Wardi sees the 1920 Revolt in three stages: (1) the stimulus that was caused by events in Deir Zur, Karabala, Tel Afar, and Baghdad; (2) the armed insur-

rection stage that began in the city of Rumatha and engulfed all of central and northern Iraq; and (3) the spreading of the insurrection into Diyala that garnered more tribal support. He writes that the middle Euphrates was the spinal cord of the revolt, and was where the most British treasure and casualties were expended. He criticizes the British:

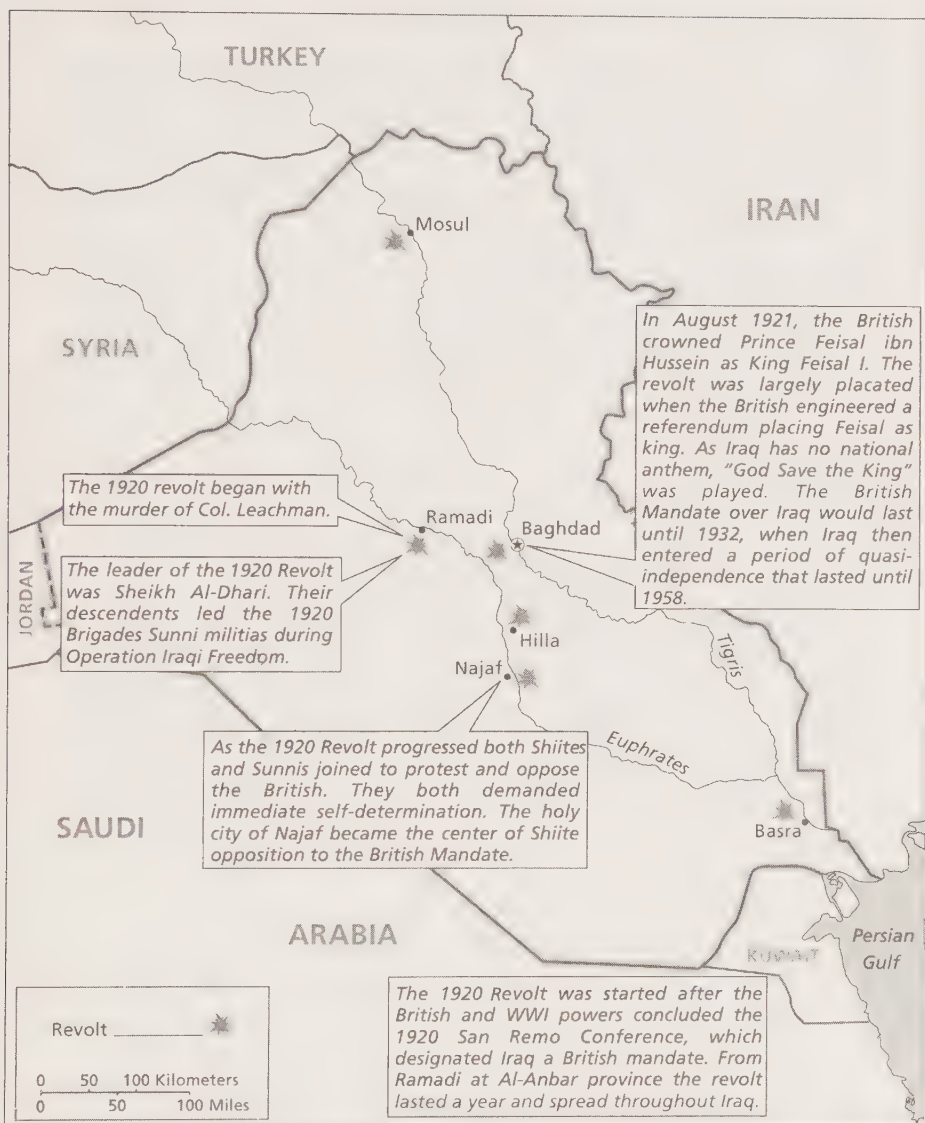
- For not having enough forces and relying too much on the new technology of aerial attacks.
- For leaving post–World War I saturated with weapons. A German Mauser rifle that cost £25 during the war cost £4 during the revolt.
- Efficient rail and telegraph spread word faster about atrocities and rebellions. So although the Ottomans and then the British upgraded Iraq's communications, this upgrade led to insurgencies coordinated by telegraph and rail networks.
- For not exploiting tribal greed. Tribes joined mainly for spoils, with independence being a secondary consideration.
- For underestimating the religious factors that breathed life into parts of the insurrection demoralized by superior British weapons.

Al-Wardi writes that the tribes were defeated for these reasons:

- They were undisciplined and joined and left the revolt as they pleased.
- Money from spoils dried up quickly and money supply was too erratic to sustain the revolt.
- Spies and informants in the pay of the British permeated every level of Iraqi society.
- Many joined the revolt based on face and honor. When the public wavered in their support, the tribes' face and honor wavered as well, and led some to abandon the revolt.

CONCLUSION

In the southern Iraqi city of Samawah tribes and nationalist forces attacked British armed riverboats HMS *Stonefly* and *Greenfly*. Urban areas such as Karbala were divided into pro- and anti-British factions. Neighborhoods estab-



MAP 3. The 1920 Revolt: The First Iraqi Nationalist Event Opposing the British Mandate

lished provisional governments that were suppressed by the British. In retaliation, General in Chief Haldane cut water to Karbala, much to the objection of Wilson who understood this would only unify the people of Karbala as they endured common suffering. In Najaf the British allowed some self-government, and even an election on August 25, 1920, of market officials that regulated trade in the city would occur. An aerial bombardment of Kufa led to damage of the mosque; anti-British agitators capitalized on this attack and defilement of an ancient mosque. Wilson finally realized the only means of quelling this insurrection was not by force alone, and began to consider talking about plans to transition Iraq into an independent entity. By August 1920 a stalemate had developed whereby tribes controlled villages and the British controlled urban areas. It would be a long road to the 1921 Cairo Conference that would develop the details of transitioning Britain's Iraqi mandate to independence by 1932. Many more casualties would occur on both sides, but the next phase of the 1920 Revolt would see increasing violence, as the British and Iraqi revolutionaries postured for strategic advantage in world opinion and negotiations. Al-Wardi's Volume 5, Part 2, will take us from July 1920 to the conclusion of the 1920 Revolt in which it became clear that Prince Feisal would ascend to the throne of the newly created nation-state of Iraq in late August 1921, after being forcibly evicted by the French and removed as king of Syria.

6

FURTHER DETAILS OF THE 1920 REVOLT (1918–1921)

A SEMINAL EVENT OF IRAQI NATIONALISM

Foreword by Lt. Gen. Richard F. Natonski, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.); Former Commander, United States Marine Forces Command; Former Deputy Commandant of the Marine Corps for Plans, Policies, and Operations (2006–2008)

Dr. Ali al-Wardi's work is important as it is an Iraqi narrative of events, not an American or British history of the country. It offers a perspective that is steeped in the psycho-social peculiarities of a sociologist and a historian who spent the majority of his life in Iraq, becoming the father of Iraqi sociology. Philip Bennett in the *Washington Post* writes, "You have to read deep into the Library of America's 1,700-page anthology, 'Reporting Vietnam,' before Vietnamese civilians or insurgents step out of the chorus and become individual subjects" (*Washington Post*, "In the War's Cast of Characters, Where Are the Iraqis," B4, Outlook Section, March 15, 2009). By exploring Arabic works like al-Wardi's, we have an already prepackaged history that offers valuable lessons on how the Ottomans, Persians, British, and Iraqi monarchy under King Feisal I addressed insurgencies, nationalist movements, tribal hostilities, and clerical hierarchies. By highlighting al-Wardi's volumes, Commander Aboul-Enein in collaboration with the U.S. Army *Armor* journal, are emphasizing the need to educate America's military using Arabic sources. We owe to the men and women going in harm's way, and undertaking the difficult task of protecting the Iraqi population, an understanding of the area of operation that goes beyond just a day of orientation or language pleasantries. It is hoped this series published by *Armor* will be used in Iraq pre-

deployment training, and be the subject of discussion and debate from our war colleges to classrooms containing soldiers preparing for an Iraq deployment. I applaud *Armor* for giving Commander Aboul-Enein a forum for this important collection of review essays. Commander Aboul-Enein and I had the pleasure of serving together aboard USS *Guam* (LPH-9) when I commanded the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit. He not only provided me sound force protection advice for my Marines, but arranged for hundreds of Marines to tour the al-Alamein Battlefield in Egypt's Western Desert. His work is a valuable contribution to educating our forces on Iraq's human terrain.

INTRODUCTION

The 1920 Revolt was a seminal event in modern Iraqi political history. Dr. Ali al-Wardi's multivolume set devotes two full volumes to just this incident, revealing the most comprehensive examination of the revolt against British authority in Iraq from religious, tribal, social, and military vantages. This discussion takes up two books, and is more than eight hundred pages long. The reason for this detail is that the revolt engulfed large swaths of Iraq. Al-Wardi describes the unique nature of how the revolt started in Baghdad, Irbil, Baaquba, and Falujah, to name a few places that would be touched with insurrection against the British mandate of Iraq. There are many lessons to be learned from reading al-Wardi's seminal volumes. From a strategic perspective, his volumes discuss the British realization that Iraq had to be placed on a tangible course towards independence. On the tactical front, the British attempted to subdue Iraq using the new technology of airpower when more and more troops were needed to finally pacify the revolt. Finally, there is much to be learned about committed nationalists versus those involved in the nationalist cause for a chance to enrich themselves on the booty from raids conducted against urban areas and British treasury houses or rail links. The line between the noble values of Arab self-determination and outright brigandage was blurred in the 1920 Revolt, just as it was blurred during the 1916 Arab Revolt in Arabia.

Al-Wardi brings the characters of the revolt to life, with all their intrigues and double-dealing. As we focus on educating America's servicemen and ser-

vicewomen on the human terrain, we would be remiss if the works of Dr. Ali al-Wardi were not highlighted, discussed, and taught to deploying units operating in Iraq. It brings to life the stories of terrain, cities, and areas within those cities, and incidents that drive Iraq's social, tribal, political, and military history. To Iraqis these are not objectives or operating bases, but areas where a rebellion started or was suppressed, where ancestors who opposed British rule are buried, and terrain where tribes made a stand against Royal Air Force war planes and British infantry formations. Al-Wardi devotes more than eight hundred pages to dissecting the social, tribal, political, and military aspects of the 1920 Revolt in his seminal eight-volume *Social Glimpses of Iraqi Modern History*.

In popular history, Iraq's 1920 Revolt started with the murder of British Colonel Leachman in central Iraq, in what is now al-Anbar Province. As al-Wardi's eight hundred pages on the 1920 Revolt demonstrate, the Leachman murder was only one incident among dozens of grievances and insults that British forces had to address throughout Iraq. It is vital that America's military planners dissect this event carefully by reading this important Arabic series, and also that they explore British accounts of the same event to understand the complexities of counterinsurgency, complexities that are unique to Iraq.

SHEIKH TALEB AL-NAQIB: COVERING ALL BASES IN THE 1920 REVOLT

One of the most interesting characters in Iraq's modern history is Sheikh Taleb al-Naqib, the sheikh of Muhammara, a region encompassing Basra and Umm Qasr. Sheikh Taleb was a master at playing many sides. In World War I he escaped Ottoman authorities and sought temporary asylum in Najd under Ibn Saud. He was involved in a failed attempt to get Ibn Saud to plunder southern Iraq, which would have challenged British authority and repaired his reputation with the Ottomans. In 1920, assessing that the British were facing mass insurrections, Sheikh Taleb wrote to the British from Arabia's Eastern Provinces where he was ruling on behalf of Ibn Saud, asking for their pardon and offering his services. The British, facing tribal chaos and nationalist insurrections, invited him to Baghdad. Ever the cautious intriguer, he arrived in Baghdad in July 1920 and visited with his supporters to assess British intentions towards him and to evaluate if he was falling into a trap. He discussed

British intentions with Abdel-Kader Khudairy; learning from him the extent of the rebellion, he then visited the British political agent to the British high commissioner in Iraq (formerly the liaison officer to the Arab Bureau in Cairo during World War I), Gertrude Bell. Khudairy was intrigued by Taleb's proposal of forming a moderate political party that would serve as a counterweight to Iraq's nationalist parties. Taleb also asked for an appointment in a British-mandated Iraq.

Taleb then spent time with leaders of the nationalist movement in Baghdad acting as a double-informant, passing information between British and Iraqi nationalist leaders. What he gained in his discussions with Iraqi nationalists was that Shiites and Sunnis were unified in the cause of Iraqi independence; and that the naming of Feisal's brother Prince Abdullah ibn Hussein as king was a ruse designed to drive a wedge between the Hashemite leaders who supported the 1916 Arab Revolt and the British who incited this revolt against the Ottomans in World War I. Naming Abdullah as king also was seen as a means of having international expression of their grievances through the Hashemites who were attending international conferences that were determining the fate of the Middle East. The Iraqi nationalists had no intention of allowing Prince Abdullah to have any real authority in Iraq.

The Iraqi nationalists were frustrated by Iraqis in Syria who were among the entourage of King Feisal ibn Hussein (brother of Abdullah) of Syria. They found the £16,000 provided by Feisal insufficient to incite rebellion and conduct attacks against British forces.

Al-Wardi captures the conversation between Taleb and Yousef al-Suweidi (among the leaders of the nationalist cause in Baghdad). Al-Suweidi proposes that Taleb become the nationalist leader Iraqis could rally around. He says, "You were a native Iraqi, and a force for rebellion." Taleb affirms he is an Arab and Iraqi, and asks that al-Suweidi explain what exactly they are fighting for. Al-Suweidi replies that they are fighting for the principle of no foreigners, no mandate, and no external interference. Taleb asks him to explain this further, asking, "What exactly is your *manhaj* (program)?" Al-Suweidi replies that they have none. Taleb then declares, "You are no better than brigands. You cannot lead a revolution without a doctrine or program. You cannot defeat the British without a program for the future of Iraq." Taleb explains that the British are planning to bring more forces from India to suppress rebellion in Iraq,

and that the nationalists cannot hope to defeat the might of the British Army. Taleb says that for him to join the nationalist cause the nationalist leader must be Iraqi from among the best lineage, and a provisional delegation must be formed to discuss gradual emancipation of Iraq from the British mandate. Taleb then leaves and goes to see Gertrude Bell to inform her of his conversation and the fear expressed by al-Suweidi at the prospect of British military reinforcements from India.

SIR PERCY COX RETURNS

On June 6, 1920, Sir Percy Cox, the popular high commissioner of Iraq who was now British minister plenipotentiary in Persia, was informed of his reappointment as high commissioner in Baghdad. He was recalled to London for discussions on the state of Iraq, and to outline a plan for the setting up of an autonomous Iraqi national government. He left Persia for London via Baghdad, stopping a few days to consult with the current high commissioner A. T. Wilson. During this visit, Wilson prepared Cox to relieve him as British High Commissioner in Iraq; the preparations between the two were made easier as Wilson had long mentored Cox in his rise through the British colonial hierarchy. Cox and Wilson drafted a proposed official statement announcing plans to transition Iraq towards independence as early as autumn 1921. Wilson discussed aspects of the statement with Iraq's nationalist leaders upon his return to Baghdad, while Cox discussed the statement with officials in London.

In August 1920 Wilson attempted to reason with reactionary revolutionary elements who wanted immediate and unconditional independence for Iraq. Wilson argued that this would lead to a collapse of administration and services and that the country would descend into tribal as well as sectarian bloodshed. The reactionary Iraqi nationalists answered that this was the price needed to pay for independence, and that freedom is taken and not given. Wilson explained the mandate would gradually transition Iraq to independence and that in addition Britain would protect Iraq from Turkish interference. The revolutionaries answered that the Turks were Muslims, and the new regime offered unconditional independence for Iraq based on the 1919 National Compact. Wilson was reduced to the only threat to use against Iraqi nationalists, which was that the British guaranteed the rights of Iraq's other groups such as the Kurds and the Shiites. Iraqi leaders answered that

these people were peasants, and that they would obey their tribal and religious leaders. The Shiite religious *hawza* were unified with Iraqi nationalists for the independence of Iraq. Wilson was so frustrated with Iraqi nationalist leaders he threatened the revolt and insurrection with military force. The Iraqis responded that British military leaders were vacationing in Persia (a reference to General Haldane and his staff), and that British troop concentrations were busy guarding oil interests in Abadan, and that once the order had been given for those troops to redeploy to Iraq a campaign of sabotage, disruption, and attacks on rail links, riverboats, oil terminals, and depots would begin, adding that the Iraqi police forces set up by the British were unreliable.

Wilson left the meeting; the next morning he drew up arrest lists of nationalist leaders. The nationalists inciting insurrection began to flee, and police altercations with pro-independence factions in Baghdad spread panic in Kazimiyah as Shiites came to defend Mohammed al-Sadr. Ironically the British had not included al-Sadr in their list of revolutionaries to detain. Nationalists fled Baghdad and hid in Yousoufiyah and Karbala. British authorities imposed martial law in Baghdad, which led to the capture of seven revolutionaries. These individuals were tried by military tribunal for firing on police forces and six were put to death.

The case of Abdel-Majid Kennah is an interesting example of the complex face of the anti-British Iraqi independence movement. Kennah was a smuggler involved in the nationalist cause for patriotic reasons, but also for a chance to make money. He was among those given a death sentence by a British military tribunal, at the urging of Sheikh Taleb, to make an example of those Iraqis undermining the gradualist approach of transitioning Iraq towards peaceful independence. The nationalists used the funerals of those executed to organize mass demonstrations, with public demonstrations of Shiite and Sunni solidarity.

In September 1920 Wilson departed Iraq after delivering a speech in Arabic at the train station to Iraq's notables, indicating his sorrow at leaving but his happiness that he was passing his commission to his protégé, Sir Percy Cox. He mentioned Iraqis like Sheikh Taleb who wanted a peaceful transition to Iraqi independence. Wilson ended with a quotation from the Quran appropriate for these difficult times: "With every difficulty, there will come times of ease." His remarks were a public acknowledgment of two reasons for

the ongoing revolt. First, British policies in World War I incited nationalist feelings against the Ottomans, and British policy makers did not consider sending guidance on the channeling of this nationalist sentiment in creating a transition to an Iraqi nationalist government. Second, Iraq's nationalist movement had been infected with reactionary, extreme, and anarchist elements that retarded progress towards an independent Iraq. The arrest of leaders in Baghdad, coupled with their fleeing the capital and the imposition of martial law, had led to calm being restored to the city by late August 1920. Along with this calm, however, Diyala Province was exploding in rebellion.

Diyala Province was important to the British, as it was to the Ottomans, because it contained access roads connecting Baghdad with the Persian border. Baaquba, the provincial capital, was the first major city encountered by caravans, pilgrims, and travelers arriving from Persia. Events in the middle Euphrates region, Baghdad, and on the Iraqi-Syrian border led tribes in Diyala to consider rebelling against British authority. The tribal chieftains in Diyala deluded themselves into believing that tribes in other parts of Iraq enjoyed fabulous plunder and that revolutionary activity paid those who were willing to take risks. Sayyid Habeeb Edroosi, who claimed descent from the Prophet, and was a Sufi leader, would be a key contact between Iraq's nationalists in Baghdad and Baaquba's leaders. Mahmood Mutwali, a leader in Baaquba, had an absolute hatred for the British because of his loss of authority, privilege, and position that had been given to him and his clan by the Ottomans. He would be a key inciter in the urban areas of Diyala, chiefly Baaquba, because he represented many of the educated *effendiah* class that brought and spread revolutionary ideas among the populace. Sayyid Saaleh Hilli was a Shiite who was a famous orator of *taziyah* (religious passion plays commemorating the death of Hussein, Muhammad's grandson), and ran a *husseiniyah* (religious center) in Baaquba. He had many contacts within the clergy and mosques within Diyala who could incite rebellion. He would be a link between Baaquba's leaders and anti-British Shiite clergy in the Najaf and Kufa *hawza*. The Sunnis of Baaquba would be represented by Sheikh Habeeb al-Khalsi. Tribal leaders who played a major role in the Diyala insurrection were Sheikh Habeeb al-Khuzairan of the Uzzah tribe and Mohammad Ukh'shaim of the Khubaysat Tribal Confederation.

The Diyala insurrection began in August 1920 with tribal greed. The Kar'khiah tribe attacked remote train stations and a treasury known to have

a safe filled with government funds for payroll in the town of Mehrut. The British responded with two regiments to pacify the Kar'khiah, which brought order in Mehrut initially. The British were lulled by their success at driving away the tribal fighters, however. What the British did not understand was that three hundred mounted tribesmen were charged with harassing these regiments, probing for weaknesses. Once they found a weakness and identified a routine, they would pounce on the regiments in a mass attack. This was the ancient tactics of *al-farr wal-karr* (retreat and attack) that probed and wore down an adversary. The tribal attack was beaten back only by a concentration of artillery fire. General Haldane believed that this final push by the tribes signified the subjugation of the wayward tribes, and that the artillery attack blunted any further attacks by this tribal rabble. Wilson, the high commissioner, disagreed with Haldane withdrawing the two regiments from Mehrut and Baaquba; even the British major in charge of Baaquba disagreed with General Haldane. The commander in chief of British forces in Iraq, however, thought that Baaquba was a sideshow, a tribal rebellion that would quickly be suppressed, and that Baghdad was a more important objective that needed protection.

General Haldane had scarce troops to keep the peace in Baghdad while dealing with insurrections in other parts of Iraq. Not long after the removal of the two British regiments from the area, tribal raids and lawlessness went from Mehrut to Baaquba; the Kar'khiah tribe raided that city, its markets, government houses, and most importantly the treasury and arsenal. Residents of Baaquba formed a local government and raised an Arab flag, convening a municipal independent government in the post office. This would be useless as tribes intimidated the city Arab government into submission. The Uzzah tribe that was away from Diyalah supporting the nationalist cause in the middle Euphrates returned to fight the Abeed tribe that was encroaching upon its lands. Haldane had dealt only with Diyala when fresh regiments arrived from India. But now Haldane had to make a choice: to devote troops to deal with the middle Euphrates and Syrian-Iraq border region that was taken over by Iraqi nationalists, or to address the anarchy in Diyalah. He decided to quickly address the chaos in Diyala, pacifying Baaquba and Shaherban and securing the access roads to Persia. Haldane used a combination of infantry, artillery, armored mobile infantry, and aerial bombardment of tribes to clear the road

of tribal threats. Regular troops took over the city and drove out the tribes, imposing fines on rebellious tribal chiefs and demolishing homes of rebel leaders. Hiding in Diyala was Muhammad al-Sadr who would flee and seek refuge in Karbala, successfully inciting rebellion in Samaraa. By September 1920 the Diyala insurrection was subdued, and the British issued a proclamation stating that all tribes who raised a white flag and sent a delegation to negotiate terms with the British commanders would not be molested or fired upon by airplanes. Tribal chiefs clamored to see the general in charge of the Diyala operation. They were to sign loyalty oaths, repay for damaged and stolen goods, and pledge not to offer asylum to nationalist agitators. The British would set up a committee made of tribal elders, municipal leaders, and British officers who formed a reconciliation and recompense committee. A side benefit to this committee was the intelligence provided on insurrectionists, and those involved in murder and sabotage of British forces and property.

In 1919 the Kurds conducted a major revolt that was brutally suppressed by the British. It lasted from May to June 1919, and resulted in the exile of the Kurdish leader Mahmoud al-Hafeed to India. In 1920 small pockets of Kurdish resistance broke out in areas bordering Diyala Province. The Khanqain Revolt involved the Kurdish Dahlu tribe; the Turks financed rebellion of the Kurds and Ottoman officer Khorshid Bey organized rebellion of the Jabbur, Rabiah, and Bani Wais tribes; they attacked British army camps containing 158 troops. The British used the forces at hand and reinforced them from the town of Qazwain to bring order to the towns of Khanqain and Kafri. The city of Irbil was pacified by rebelling tribes using British forces in Kirkuk and Mosul; these forces were marched as a show of force to entice the Kurdish tribes to negotiate, a tactic that worked, as the 1920 Kurdish rebellion was not as potent as the region's 1919 Revolt. With some gold and a Turkish military officer, however, the British would tie down a few regiments suppressing a Kurdish outbreak of hostility.

FALLUJAH AND AL-ANBAR

Popular history has the 1920 Revolt starting at Fallujah. This is mythology, and in fact the revolt started in various regions of Iraq and through differing motives from nationalist to outright greed. What makes this insurrection, known to many Iraqis as the Zaubah Rebellion, stand out was the murder

of a British colonel and intelligence officer Gerard Leachman. The roots of the Zaubah Rebellion began in 1917, when the British pursued the policy of selecting one tribal chieftain and making him responsible for that region. In the Zaubah area, the British selected Sheikh al-Dhari as the responsible leader with an allowance of 750 silver rupees a month. In 1918 the British withdrew its support for al-Dhari, for reasons unknown; during the 1920 Revolt, the British resumed their payment to al-Dhari, but lowered it to 500 silver rupees a month. This reduced payment was viewed by the sheikh as inadequate; what made matters worse was the contempt with which British colonel Leachman treated al-Dhari, insulting him publicly numerous times. Al-Wardi reveals how al-Dhari attended a banquet and was not seated among tribal elders and was turned away by Leachman himself. This treatment drove al-Dhari towards collaborating with the Iraq's revolutionaries and nationalists. Leachman, who was more attuned to events in Arabia than he was to those in Iraq, was out of touch in Iraq. In a speech he said that the British were the only ones keeping Shiites and Sunnis from killing each other. Leachman was unaware that the awarding of Iraq as a British mandate outraged Iraqis so much that the call for independence was shared by Shiite and Sunnis alike. Al-Dhari incited tribes in and around Fallujah and Ramadi to raid roads and rail links to Baghdad. Leachman used motorized gendarme and police to pursue these tribal brigands. Al-Wardi writes that the 1928 court of inquiry was the best source of how Colonel Leachman was killed. Leachman had insulted al-Dhari too many times. When they were negotiating a cessation of hostilities, al-Dhari insisted that he had nothing to do with the raids. In response Leachman addressed him as *Ya Dhari* (You Dhari!) instead of Sheikh al-Dhari. Reports said that Leachman called him a liar and spat on him. Al-Dhari ordered his son, "*Khamis dook'uh*" (Khamis, kill him), and the son fired his rifle into Leachman while al-Dhari took his sword to that officer. They also killed Leachman's Indian driver. The murder of this senior British officer emboldened tribes and made al-Dhari a hero.

The Zaubah Rebellion isolated British forces in Fallujah and Ramadi. The British could not travel from Baghdad to Fallujah except in an armored railcar with mounted machine guns. General Haldane used combined infantry, motorized infantry, and air; it would take the negotiations in the 1921 Cairo Conference to lead to the pacification of this region of Iraq. Three lead-

ers of the Zaubah Rebellion fled to Arabia, and one, Jameel Madfai, served the future king of Jordan, Abdullah ibn Hussein. Sheikh al-Dhari had a 10,000 silver rupee bounty on his head; in 1927 he was betrayed by his Armenian driver and died in an assassination while awaiting trial in a military tribunal.

The British system of paying off tribal elders continued until 1933. The 1921 Cairo Conference installed Prince Feisal ibn Hussein as king of Iraq and placed the nation on a course of independence by 1932. Why does al-Dhari matter? His descendants Muthana and Harith al-Dhari are major representatives of the Sunni Iraqi Nationalist Insurgency, and headed the Muslim Ulema (clergy) Council. Today one of their brigades is called the 1920 Brigade after the 1920 Revolt that at one time cooperated with al-Qaida in Iraq. These Sunni tribes would join American forces and form the Sons of Iraq movement, which craved vengeance against the excesses of al-Qaida in Iraq.

CONCLUSION

Al-Wardi ends his volumes on the 1920 Revolt by asking and then attempting to answer a question: Why did the Iraqis not revolt against the Ottomans, yet zealously revolt against the British? He lists the following factors:

- Religious factors. The Ottomans were Muslims and the British were not and this underlying tension was always present when the British attempted to govern Iraq.
- The death of the quietist Grand Ayatollah Yazdi and his replacement with the anti-British Grand Ayatollah Shirazi brought the Shiites to cooperate with the Sunnis over Iraqi independence.
- Incitement of the *effendiah* class. Iraq's bureaucrats were unemployed and underemployed. They would be the Iraqi masses' first introduction to the ideas of the French Revolution, European nationalism, and news of Arab revolts against the British in places like Egypt.
- British broken promises. As A. T. Wilson mentioned in his farewell remarks, the British did not adequately address or even attempt to effectively address what a mandate over Iraq meant nor did they provide any sort of timeline for Iraqi independence.
- External influences. The 1920 Revolt was sustained by outside interferences, incitement, and support from Syria, Persia, Turkey, and

Arabia. Iraqis who fought against the Ottomans in the 1916 Arab Revolt coalesced in Syria with the Hashemites and formed a cadre of incitement and rebellion directed against the British in Iraq.

Al-Wardi covers the process, personalities, and events that created the nation-state of Iraq in late August 1921. Following a plebiscite showing 96 percent in favor, which was questionable but had been engineered by the British who wanted to put Feisal in power, Feisal agreed to become king of Iraq. He faced the typical challenges of a Sunni ruler attempting to rule a Shiite majority.

7

TOWARDS THE FORMATION OF THE KINGDOM OF IRAQ (1920–1923)

Foreword by Dr. John Wahlquist, Middle East and Islamic Studies Instructor,
National Intelligence University, Washington, DC; Colonel (Ret.),
U.S. Air Force and former Deputy J-2 (Intelligence),
United States Central Command (CENTCOM)

No expense should be spared when orienting our soldiers to their area of operation. Not just in support of combat operations, but more importantly to empower Iraqis and to undertake their protection that would lead to an erosion of the influence of Militant Islamist insurgents. We also need to read what the Iraqi population reads when it comes to how they perceive their own history. Although English language histories on Iraq are useful, we must focus on Arabic language materials that provide a purely Iraqi perspective on their country. Commander Aboul-Enein is a regular guest lecturer in my Islamic Studies elective at the National Intelligence University. He brings rare expertise and has helped shape the understanding of the region to a new generation of America's defense intelligence analysts.

Dr. Ali al-Wardi is widely read by Iraq's intelligentsia, and can be found not only in Iraq's government buildings and archives, but also in prison libraries. We cannot afford for units to deploy to Iraq without arming them with al-Wardi's work. Commander Aboul-Enein and *Armor* have done a great service by highlighting al-Wardi's work in this series of essays. This essay will focus on al-Wardi's discussions on the delicate stage of forming Iraq as a nation-state. Readers will discover a myriad of details and surprises, such as a 1922 Fatwa endorsed by Iraq's Sunni and Shiite clerics to address

the threat from Wahhabi renegades attacking southern Iraq. It is an example of Iraq's Shiites and Sunnis agreeing that Wahhabis were not acting out of any religious conviction but simply using evangelism as an excuse to loot, pillage, and murder. It is my hope that this series will be utilized to educate units deploying to Iraq, and more importantly will stimulate discussion among our soldiers. I look forward to the debate this series will stimulate and will be assigning this series to my students at the National Intelligence University.

INTRODUCTION

The 1920 Revolt was the first nationalist movement inspired by Iraqis, and unified many disparate elements towards the concept of an independent Iraq. British officials realized that they could no longer ignore public sentiment and that they needed at least to shape events to transition Iraq towards independence. This chapter discusses Ali al-Wardi's sixth volume of his seminal *Social Glimpses of Iraqi Modern History*. It is important to study this work as it delves into the mechanics and intricacies of the creation of modern-day Iraq in 1922, and Iraq's path to complete independence ten years later. In addition to Arabic sources, al-Wardi reviews original documents located at the British Archives in London. He relies on the two volumes published in 1961 of the correspondence of Gertrude Bell. Al-Wardi, as a sociology professor, used students at the University of Baghdad pursuing their master's-level and doctoral work in sociology and history to supplement the research of this sixth volume. The author obtains diaries from Arab, Ottoman, and British officials; local newspapers of the period; and finally oral histories to capture the events of Iraq's independence through the lens of tribal elders.

In the last chapter, we read about how Sir Percy Cox, who was British minister to Persia, was named high commissioner for Iraq and then summoned to London for talks. Cox argued with British officials and parliamentarians that Iraq must not be abandoned, which would mean leaving behind £8 million (\$40 million) in capital investment in Iraq. A withdrawal from Iraq would lead to the encroachment by Turkey, and weakness in the eyes of British allies in the Middle East, as well as Arabs who are supported by Britain. In

addition, it would take an additional two divisions to conduct a safe withdrawal from Iraq, leaving behind chaos and instability.

The high commissioner, A. T. Wilson, departed Baghdad in September 1920, and Cox arrived in Basra within the week. Cox was met by Sayyid Sheikh Taleb Naqib and Sheikh Khazzal, both major leaders in southern Iraq. Sheikh Taleb was a prominent figure who played off the Wahhabis, Hashemites, Ottomans, and the British in a single-minded quest to increase and maintain his own power. He was among those vying for kingship of Iraq, and led a movement called Iraq for Iraqis, attempting to thwart British designs to install Hashemite rule in Iraq. Al-Wardi's Volume 6 describes Taleb's final act in Iraqi politics before he disappeared into obscurity.

SIR PERCY COX AND THE CREATION OF THE IRAQI MANDATE

Al-Wardi discusses the dynamism of Cox's tenure. After landing in Basra in September 1920, he spent a few days in southern Iraq traveling by plane to Nasiriyah, Amarah, Kurna, and Qal'aa Saleh, making himself available to consult with tribal elders, religious notables, and officials. He took a riverboat and then a train from Basra to Baghdad, arriving in mid-October 1920 to a reception of Baghdad's notables, including General Haldane, commander in chief of British forces in Iraq. The reception included a military salute, and the playing of *God Save the King*. These ceremonies were designed to showcase British military might and governmental control, while at the same time drawing closer those Iraqi revolutionaries who wanted a smooth transition towards independence and divorcing them from reactionaries who wanted a violent overthrow of the British mandate. Cox immediately got to business, assigning Gertrude Bell as his liaison officer and entering into discussions on the prospects of establishing a provisional government.

In London and Baghdad, there developed an anti-Cox coalition within the British establishment that sought to undermine his plans for gradual independence for Iraq. This group believed in the theories of social Darwinism, the "white man's burden," and the civilizing mission of Great Britain towards her subject peoples. This faction argued that it would take generations to expunge tribalism from Iraqi society. In 1923 Thomas Lyell published *The Ins and Outs of Mesopotamia*, whose central thesis insisted that Iraqis specifically and Muslims generally were incapable of self-rule. Lyell argued that the Islamic

faith was not progressive, and that it would wreck any attempt at instilling national loyalty impulses. When reading this, think of regrettable statements already made in the twenty-first century by so-called experts in the United States and in the Middle East who believe that Iraq can only be ruled by dictatorship and that Iraqis are incapable of democratic rule. This anti-Cox faction within the British bureaucracy and military was outraged at the pardon of political agitators like Yousef al-Suweidi and at the Cox policy of reducing taxation in Iraq.

Cox pressed ahead with plans to form a temporary council of ministers, and there was discussion of Sheikh Taleb as provisional prime minister. Among Baghdad's most premier families, Iraqi notables in Baghdad settled on Abdel-Rahman al-Gaylani as prime minister of a new temporary provisional council in Iraq. The temporary ministry included

- Jafar al-Askari, defense minister;
- Sheikh Taleb, interior minister;
- Sasoon Haspiel, finance minister;
- Mustafa Aloussi, minister of religious affairs; and
- Hassan Babji, justice minister.

These provisional ministries lasted from October 1920 to January 1921. Iraq's notables agreed to create eight functional ministries and fourteen posts of ministers without portfolio. The ministers without portfolio provided major Baghdad families and tribal elders with a voice in the central government in Baghdad. The ministers met twice a week at Sheikh Taleb's home. Sheikh Taleb played a major role in the formation of this temporary government, and assigned a British aide or adviser to each minister.

The integration of Shiites into the temporary council of ministers was a challenge for Cox because of anti-Shiite sentiment among Sunnis, as well as Shiite clergy dissuading Shiites from participating in the government in any form by decreeing that anyone who joined this government would be collaborating with nonbelievers. After much negotiation, Cox and Sheikh Taleb brought Bahr al-Uloom Tabatai in as the minister of education and health. The Kurds were represented by Ezzat Kirkukli as the minister of labor and transport.

CREATION OF IRAQI INSTITUTIONS

Hashemite Prince Feisal ibn Hussein of the 1916 Arab Revolt began a political campaign lobbying to be named king of Iraq. He published the newspaper *al-Istiqlal* as a media arm to promote the idea among Iraqis and in the Levant. In addition, many of his Iraqi officers began returning to Iraq from Syria, after the forcible assertion of the mandate by French forces in 1920. Feisal saw the need to resettle these Iraqi officers demobilizing from the Ottoman army to create a base of support for him to be king of Iraq. In addition, the British needed to place a ruler at the head of a temporary provisional council in Iraq that would evolve into a British proxy who could manage their mandate granted in Iraq after World War I. British officials were eager to have an Arab at the head of Iraq, and for Iraqis to take charge of security, while asserting British control of key components of Iraqi internal and external affairs, chiefly rights, foreign, fiscal, petroleum, and defense policies.

Among those close to Prince Feisal was the provisional defense minister, Jafar al-Askari. Between 1920 and 1921, 111 Iraqis in Syria were demobilized from the Ottoman Army and returned to Iraq. Among the first appropriations of the temporary government were 75,000 silver rupees to repatriate Iraqis and their families. Iraqis in Turkey began to return, including students, merchants, military officers, professionals, and bureaucrats. There began a slow transition from British and Indian bureaucrats to Iraqis, and in January 1921 the Iraqi Army Command was established with ten officers. Cox invited many of the senior officers such as Nuri al-Said to lunch as a means of reintegrating them into Iraq's emerging political and bureaucratic structures.

This bureaucracy absorbed thousands of Iraqis as battalions of inspectors and logisticians formed. Cox, Lt. Col. Jafar al-Askari, Lt. Col. Nuri al-Said, and Sheikh Taleb oversaw the process of reintegrating Iraqis into the civil service, bureaucracy, and emerging government. The Shiite reluctance to collaborate with the British meant the army became overwhelmingly Sunni. The view of Grand Ayatollah Mehdi Khalsi was that an oppressive Muslim was better than a just infidel. During this period the pro-independence Grand Ayatollah Mirza Shirazi died in August 1920 and was replaced by Grand Ayatollah Fathallah Isfahani as the leader of the Shiites in Iraq. Isfahani died five months later, and the mantle passed to Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Taqi Shirazi who was avidly anti-British and who wanted an immediate break with Great Britain.

The new grand ayatollah refused to meet with Cox, much as Grand Ayatollah Sistani had refused to meet face to face with Ambassador Paul Bremer, and worked through intermediaries to communicate with American officials. Of note, Grand Ayatollah Khalsi, the leading Shiite cleric during Iraq's formation as a nation-state, was an Iraqi who accepted Persian citizenship to avoid Ottoman military conscription. This nuance is significant in the struggle for leadership within the Najaf *hawza*. Today, as of this writing, Muqtada al-Sadr is playing on his *urubah* (Arabness) in speeches to distinguish himself from Grand Ayatollah Sistani who is Persian, but who has spent his life in Iraq.

THE BRITISH RECRUIT A KING: PRINCE FEISAL AND THE CREATION OF AN IRAQI MONARCHY

After Cox completed the formation of a temporary ministry, he strove to undertake the difficult job of locating an appropriate king for Iraq. The candidate would have to be acceptable to both the Iraqis and to his superiors in London. Jafar al-Askari, who was a member of Prince Feisal's entourage, worked diligently to lobby for Feisal to be named king of Iraq; he was helped in this effort by Nuri al-Said and Gertrude Bell, Cox's liaison officer. Al-Wardi notes from his archival research that A. T. Wilson, Cox's predecessor, was the first to propose Prince Feisal as king of Iraq in a cable to London. Wilson argued this would be a decent consolation after Feisal had been forcibly removed as king of Syria by French forces in 1920.

In August 1920 British foreign minister Lord Curzon began making overtures to the French government, eliciting their views on the British making Feisal king of Iraq. The French had an extremely low opinion of Feisal; the British argued that a cadre of Iraqi leaders had expressed their desire for Feisal. Ultimately, however, London realized that with Feisal as king in Iraq, they could redeploy 70,000 troops currently used to keep the peace in Iraq. In November 1920 Lord Curzon wrote to Feisal, who had been exiled from Syria to northern Italy after his defeat at the Battle of Maysalun, and invited him to come to London for talks.

Al-Wardi recounts the meeting between Curzon and Feisal: the British foreign minister greeted Feisal and asked why he was not wearing his traditional Arab robes and headdress. Feisal responded, "They [the French] stripped me of my country [Syria], and I have stripped myself of these robes."

Curzon responded, “You will don better Arab robes than the ones lost.” Feisal understood the offer immediately as meaning that with his removal as king of Syria, he would become king of Iraq with British support. By the end of the month Curzon dispatched Major Cornwallis as Feisal’s personal aide. His mission was to advise Feisal, but also to ensure that Feisal accepted the concept of gradual independence for the Iraqi mandate, dissuade Feisal from conducting any raids or retribution against French forces in Syria, and finally to ensure the perception that he was not a pawn in British hands.

In addition to French pressures against Feisal, the prince’s own family added their own pressures. Prince Feisal’s father Hussein ibn Ali, who was the king of the Hijaz and shierief of Mecca, demanded Feisal refuse the throne of Iraq in favor of his brother Prince Abdullah who was camped in Amman, Jordan. The father wrote Feisal that his acceptance of Iraq would be construed as selfishness on his part, and overt collusion with the British. Major Cornwallis kept Lord Curzon informed of the father’s correspondence to Prince Feisal and proposed that either Sir Cox hold an informal plebiscite to give voice to Iraqi desires for Feisal or that Prince Abdullah depart Amman and assume the throne of Iraq. He recommended the second course of action, saying that organizing a plebiscite would be difficult in the short run, but acknowledging that Feisal assuming the throne of Iraq would be in Britain’s long-term interests. Feisal, however, refused to assume the throne of Iraq unless his brother Abdullah publicly surrendered his claims to Iraq to him.

WINSTON CHURCHILL, THE 1921 CAIRO CONFERENCE, AND THE OBJECTION OF PRINCE ABDULLAH

Winston Churchill became British colonial secretary in February 1921. The Middle East portfolio became his to solve, and his first act was to create a Middle East bureau and bring in T. E. Lawrence to advise him. Churchill expressed his wish for a conference to be convened in Cairo that year to solve the remaining problems of World War I, which were the Middle East generally and Iraq specifically.

MANDATE OF PALESTINE

The Cairo Conference convened in March 1921. The delegates from Iraq included Cox, Bell, General Haldane, Jafar al-Askari, and Sassoon Hasqiel.

Churchill and T. E. Lawrence attended, and it was agreed that Prince Feisal would make the optimal monarch for Iraq, acceptable to most Iraqis and the British. T. E. Lawrence, according to al-Wardi's book, proposed that the British Royal Air Force be the main arm used to subdue tribes and bring order, allowing British Expeditionary Forces to depart.

Soon after the Cairo Conference, Churchill and Lawrence met Prince Abdullah and told him of the decision to make his brother king of Iraq. The prince, encamped in Amman of present-day Jordan, took the news badly. It took weeks of negotiations, with the British using the carrot and stick approach. First, they cleaved the territory in mandated Palestine, known as Transjordan, and created a kingdom for Abdullah to rule. Palestine proper remained a British mandate until their withdrawal in 1948. They also affirmed that if Abdullah were able to successfully revolt against the French in Syria, London would not stand in the way should he name himself king of Transjordan and Syria. They also threatened that, without British military help, Ibn Saud in the Najd could arrive in Mecca and evict his father, who was king of the Hijaz. Prince Abdullah relented to the demands of the British for his brother to become king of Iraq, although he never warmed to the idea.

SAYYID TALEB AGITATES AND CHALLENGES PLANS FOR FEISAL TO BE NAMED KING

Sayyid Taleb understood that he had been politically marginalized when he was not among the Iraqis invited to the Cairo Conference. He used the absence of Sir Percy Cox to agitate and stimulate his Iraq for Iraqis movement. Taleb traveled around Iraq, lobbying that he should be a candidate for king of Iraq, and promised that, if selected, he would release political prisoners. Newspaper editorials denouncing Prince Feisal began appearing even before the return of the Iraqi delegation from Cairo. When Cox returned in April 1921, he found Iraq divided into the Sherifian faction (those wanting Prince Feisal or Abdullah as king), and the Iraq for Iraqis faction under Sayyid Taleb.

Cox held off announcing the main decision of the Cairo Conference, the selection of Prince Feisal as king, and addressed issues resolved in Cairo such as military compensation of Iraqis, internal security of Iraq, border control, and general amnesty for political prisoners. He used his predecessor's

(A. T. Wilson) informal plebiscite conducted in 1919, which revealed a desire for Hashemite rule with the understanding that it would remove the British from Iraq, to argue that the imposition of Prince Feisal was the will of the Iraqi people. This did not please the Sayyid Taleb faction, however. Sayyid Taleb met with the British editor of the *London Daily Telegraph* who was on tour in Iraq and threatened that the imposition of Feisal would lead to tribal insurrection, and that he would take his complaints to Paris, Cairo, and Istanbul. Assassination threats began to circulate against Prince Feisal and British officials in Baghdad and Basra. The pressures in Baghdad and Basra did not subside until the British arrested Sayyid Taleb and exiled him to Ceylon (modern-day Sri Lanka) off the Indian coast, providing him a stipend of 2,500 rupees annually. He returned to Iraq in 1925, and died while seeking medical treatment in Munich in 1929. He is buried in Basra.

The chief of the Muhammara Tribal Confederation, Sheikh Khazzal, was another challenger to Feisal and the British plans to make him king of Iraq. The British granted general amnesty to all Iraqi political prisoners being held in Cairo, the Hijaz, and Palestine, orchestrating their return alongside Prince Feisal in a public display of him claiming the throne of Iraq. All the political prisoners and escaped revolutionaries who were in exile in India boarded HMS *Northbrook*, a British destroyer bound for Basra. In that same week in the British House of Commons Churchill announced his support of Feisal as heir-designate to Iraq. Feisal arrived in Iraq in June 1921 and spent several days visiting both Shiite and Sunni tribal and clerical leaders.

FEISAL CROWNED KING FEISAL I OF IRAQ

In late June 1921 Feisal received an endorsement from Grand Ayatollah Khalsi, and the British felt confident enough to hold a formal plebiscite in Iraq's major cities like Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, Kirkuk, Hilla, Karbala, and Diyala, garnering a 96 percent approval rating for Feisal as king. August 21, 1921, was specifically chosen by Feisal as his coronation date. It corresponded to Eid al-Ghadir, a holy day in Shiism in which Prophet Muhammad allegedly designated Ali, his cousin and son-in-law, successor. This was calculated to remind the Shiites of Feisal's descent from Ali, despite his clearly Sunni upbringing in Mecca and Constantinople.

Feisal's first order of business as king was the employment of as many Iraqis as possible into the bureaucracy; he also opened schools and universities and formed a new council of ministers. Among his chief advisers assigned to Feisal by Cox was British liaison officer Gertrude Bell. Feisal also met halfway with Grand Ayatollah Khalsi in the appointment of such persons as the mayor of Samara, who was a Shi'ite. Perhaps fortuitously, a crisis stemming from the Najd drew the Shi'ites closer to King Feisal, and offered a chance to unify both Shi'ites and Sunnis against a common threat. It also, however, altered the careful balance of British policy towards what would be the future states of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait.

SPRING 1922: WAHHABI INCURSIONS INTO IRAQ

In August 1921 King Feisal was installed by the British as king of Iraq. As a member of the Hashemite clan, a Sunni, and a descendant of Prophet Muhammad, he made overtures to the Iraqi Shi'ites. King Feisal had to balance his Sunni origins with governing a Shi'ite majority, and his position was by no means secure; he imported many Arab Sunni military officers who had served in the Ottoman Army to help him maintain order and government in Iraq. On March 11, 1922, the new Iraqi monarch faced his first real external threat when a large raiding party of Ikhwan led by Faisal al-Dawish left the territory of Ibn Saud and, under the pretext of bringing a purer form of Islam, destroyed 781 homes, stole 130 horses, and hauled off thousands of camels, sheep, and donkeys south of Nasiriyah. Reports that they had butchered people like "goats," destroyed holy sites, and enslaved women and children (some of whom escaped enslavement) soon arrived in Baghdad and Basra.

The Ikhwan were a fanatical group whose mission was to spread the teachings of Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab by force. Both Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud and his ancestor Muhammad Ibn Saud used the Ikhwan as shock troops in their effort to create what eventually became the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. King Feisal was angered by this assault; it was not only an affront to Iraq, but also reopened the ongoing rivalry between Ibn Saud and the Hashemites. It is important to realize that in 1924 Ibn Saud's forces evicted King Feisal's father the sherief of Mecca Hussein ibn Ali, then installed as king of the Hijaz. From Ibn Saud's view, the British had surrounded him with Hashemites, yet

Ibn Saud had to maintain his relations with the British. (King Feisal's brother Abdullah had been installed as king of Transjordan.) Sir Percy Cox managed this tangled web of intrigues as British high commissioner of Baghdad.

THE BRITISH ROYAL AIR FORCE RESPONDS

In 1922 the British Royal Air Force (RAF) dispatched a reconnaissance plane to gather intelligence on the size of the Ikhwan force. This plane was shot down as it made a low-level pass over the encampments south of the rail lines linking Nasririya and al-Samawah. British military leaders in Iraq responded to the shoot-down by sending four planes to strafe and bomb the Ikhwan encampments. One of those four planes was shot down, and the RAF sent another wing of four planes to continue their air raid of the Wahhabi Ikhwan. Although the strikes contained the Ikhwan, it did not deter them. King Feisal expressed his outrage when he learned that Sir Cox had attempted to stop the RAF raids. The Iraqi monarch expressed a desire for stronger measures to push the Ikhwan back into the Najd.

BRITISH COMMISSIONER IN BAGHDAD BALANCES HASHEMITES AND IBN SAUD

Sir Percy Cox balanced British relations with Ibn Saud. He feared being drawn into the dynastic squabbles between the Hashemites and Ibn Saud and wanted to calm tensions by sending a letter to Ibn Saud asking for an explanation for the Ikhwan raids. Cox received an answer from the sultan of Najd (Ibn Saud's title before he became sultan of Najd and king of the Hijaz in 1925 and finally king of Saudi Arabia in 1932), saying that Faisal al-Dawish acted on his own and would be punished. No mention of reparations appeared in Ibn Saud's letter, which outraged Iraqi public opinion. Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud did indicate he had no issue with the RAF attacking this renegade group, however, and that more strenuous means should be taken to subdue Faisal al-Dawish. The street began spreading conspiracy theories that the British had engineered the entire incident, and Shiite clergy attempted to gain popular support by seizing on Iraq's outrage. King Feisal responded in late March by sending a delegation made up of representatives from the defense, interior, and justice ministries to investigate the raid. They filed a report at the end of the month with an assessment of damage and determined that the Iraqi government was unresponsive

despite receiving not only advanced warnings of the raid, but also pleas from the citizens of Nasiriyah. The report was published in several newspapers, including *al-Istiqlal* and *al-Iraq*, further outraging the Iraqi population. King Feisal used the report to remove five ministers from office. Sir Cox expressed outrage at not being consulted and discussed the loss of control over King Feisal with British colonial secretary Winston Churchill.

AN IRAQI SUNNI FATWA SANCTIONING WAR WITH THE MILITANT SUNNI IKHWAN

In early April 1922 a meeting of Sunni leaders and clerics led by Sheikh Abdul-Wahhab (no relation to the founder of Wahhabism, Sheikh Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab) and Ahmed Sheikh Daud was held to decide several matters:

- (1) Could the Iraqi Sunni's bear arms against the Wahhabis, fellow Sunni coreligionists?
- (2) If so, was cooperation with Shiites in common defense acceptable?
- (3) If a coordinated Sunni-Shia effort was acceptable, who should represent the Sunnis in a meeting in Karbala to declare jihad against the Wahhabi Ikhwan?

The text of the unique fatwa drafted as a result of the meeting is found on page 145 of al-Wardi's book (Volume 5, book 2) and is a single paragraph long. It outlines the questions asked, and then issues a positive ruling on two of the three questions posed: that the Wahhabis from Arabia were brigands, and that it was Islamically lawful for Sunnis to collaborate with Shiites to fight Sunni coreligionists who were brigands. This enabled the Sunnis present to discuss who would make up and represent their delegation to the Shiites, for whoever was selected would speak for Iraq's Sunnis. The text of the fatwa was published in newspapers; al-Wardi references an editorial in the newspaper *al-Istiqlal* dated April 6, 1922, signed by twelve Sunni clerics, including Sheikh Abdul-Wahab, Bahauddin al-Naqshabanbi, and Abdul-Malik al-Shawaf. The group settled on a delegation of four under the leadership of Ahmed Sheikh Daud to travel to Karbala and endorse the declaration of jihad against the Ikhwan before a representative of King Feisal and other sects present such as the Shiite *hawza* of Najaf.

On the two questions, the fatwa ruled that since the Wahhabis had used the excuse of proselytizing to sow destruction upon fellow Muslims and to give no quarter, pillaging, murdering, and attacking the honor of families by enslaving women and children, then they are *khawarij* (a fringe group outside the faith) on which war must be waged. The term “*khawarij*” (anglicized into Kharijites) has not only a literal, but also a religious historical meaning. The Kharijites insisted on the right to revolt against any ruler who deviated from the example of the Prophet Muhammad. The Kharijites originated after Muhammad’s death and advocated for the succession of Ali, before turning against Ali in 658 CE. From this essentially political position, the Kharijites developed a variety of theological and legal doctrines that further set them apart from both mainstream Sunni and mainstream Shiite Muslims. In modern times, Muslim scholars and governments have called the “new Kharijites” terrorist groups and brigands that emphasize the practice of *takfir* to justify the killing of innocent people.

THE KARBALA CONFERENCE: A MEETING OF IRAQ’S SUNNIS AND SHIITES

The Karbala Conference convened on April 9, 1922, amid 100,000 visitors to Karbala; more than five hundred troops had to be dispatched to maintain crowd control. Sir Cox pressured King Feisal not to attend. That was a difficult choice for the king to make. He saw the conference as an opportunity to unite Sunni and Shiite, so he endorsed the proceedings by sending his close adviser Nuri al-Said. The *ulema* present in what would be called the Tenth of Shaaban Karbala Conference, witnessed both Iraqi Shiite and Sunni *ulema* sanction war against the Sunni Wahhabi Ikhwan if reparations were not paid to Iraqi victims of Wahhabi raids and those involved in those raids went unpunished by Ibn Saud.

Cox and King Feisal disagreed over the Karbala Conference. The British commissioner not only had to balance British interests between Ibn Saud and the Hashemites, but also was concerned that the findings of the Karbala Conference would be used to arm the tribes under the pretext of fighting the Ikhwan, arms that could easily be turned against the British in Iraq. Cox was well aware that among the participants of the Karbala Conference were leaders and clerics who incited and participated in the 1920 Revolt—a revolt that

took weeks to suppress with hundreds of British troop casualties. Cox worked to let the steam out of the Karbala Conference and engineered a series of talks between representatives of Ibn Saud and King Feisal.

The Muhammara Truce between Iraq and what would become Saudi Arabia and Kuwait revived discussions over the borders between Ibn Saud's Najd and al-Hasa regions of central and eastern Arabia and Iraq. The truce brought a stop to Wahhabi raids into Iraq and eventually led to the late November 1922 Uqair Conference that, in effect, took territory from the Saudis and gave it to Iraq, and then took territory from Kuwait and gave it to the Saudis. The modern borders between Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia began to take form starting with the discussions begun by Sir Cox.

END OF THE WAHHABI INCURSIONS

In the twenty-first century, American military leaders can learn much from this little-known history. Al-Wardi's discussion of the Karbala Conference shows a precedent in which Iraqi Sunnis and Shiites collaborated on opposing a militant Sunni presence represented by the Wahhabi Ikhwan. It is an earlier version of the cooperation seen today with the Iraqi Sunnis of the Anbar Awakening fighting al-Qaida in Iraq. Had Sir Cox not intervened and had the Iraqis then resorted to arms or extracted reparations from the Wahhabi Ikhwan, the fatwa could have fused Iraqi Shiites and Sunnis into a common national effort that could have led to the creation of a true nation-state. Without British help, however, it is doubtful the Iraqis could have defeated the forces of Ibn Saud. From 1926 to 1929, the Ikhwan were uncontrollable; Ibn Saud dispatched modern forces to defeat this fanatical Islamic Sunni sect, crushing them in the plains of al-Sabila near al-Artawiyah. Faisal al-Dawish, the man who led the Ikhwan raid against southern Iraq in 1922, and his forces were massacred by Ibn Saud in 1929. The descendants of those killed at al-Sabila masterminded the takeover of the 1979 Grand Mosque in Mecca; the leader, Juhayman al-Utaybah, grew-up indoctrinated with stories of the 1929 massacre.

CONCLUSION

King Feisal's credibility erodes with British insistence on the Iraqi mandate. King Feisal spent his entire tenure as king attempting to change the terms of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty to designate Iraq as an ally and not a country mandated

by Great Britain. Maintaining the mandate led to intertribal fighting between tribes who were pro-mandate and those who wanted outright independence from Britain. This conflict took its worst form in the Zhu Qar region of Iraq. From the lack of timetable towards independence Iraq formed political parties, three of which had as their main platform the eviction of the British; these were the Freedom, Nationalist, and Renaissance parties. Some ministers resigned and others were asked to resign, and Iraq's early government was in chaos. When Kemal Atatürk defeated combined Greek, French, and British forces in 1922, consolidating what would be the Republic of Turkey, he stationed four divisions along the Iraqi border. Iraq's Sunni clerics issued a fatwa prohibiting the fighting of coreligionists and declaring the British colonial infidels. Atatürk's forces were posturing and dealing with consolidating their hold in the Kurdish regions of modern-day Turkey. The British insistence on maintaining the mandate led to the erosion of King Feisal's authority and credibility; he lost the support of the Shiite clerical hierarchy in 1923.

Feisal imposed an unpopular compulsory military draft, but he also developed the first highways linking Iraq's major cities and providing a means for the development of Iraq's oil infrastructure. Al-Wardi discusses how, in 1930, Feisal attempted to redefine Iraq's status vis-à-vis the British, seeking a change to the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty by incorporating an end-date to the British mandate. The instability this issue caused led to the British granting independence for Iraq in 1932, but Britain retained its military bases, rights for military transit, and oil concessions. King Feisal died in 1933 while visiting Switzerland.

This historical narrative by Dr. al-Wardi is important for America's military planners, as every negotiation with Iraqis is influenced by the events of the British mandate. Al-Wardi's book also contains helpful surprises, such as the cooperation of Iraq's Shiites and Sunnis to push back a renegade violent Sunni group radiating from Arabia. This history can be applied today to bolster the stature of Iraq's Sunni militant groups that have turned against al-Qaida in Iraq.

The next chapters will feature al-Wardi's final volume, Volume 6, which, like Volume 5, is actually in two books. In Volume 6 he discusses the formation of modern-day Saudi Arabia, details of Prince Feisal's short-lived monarchy in Syria (1918–1920), sherief of Mecca Hussein's ibn Ali's and his son Ali

ibn Hussein's final days after the loss of their realm and Mecca to Ibn Saud, and his final thoughts on his multivolume set. He includes intricate details on the Middle East generally and Iraq specifically from the nineteenth century to the 1930s that are not covered in his previous volumes. He wrote the last volume in an attempt to reconcile and include historical vignettes from a wider Middle East perspective that would have an influence on Iraq.

8

WEAKENING OTTOMAN CONTROL OF ARABIA BEFORE WORLD WAR I

Foreword by Brig. Gen. Katherine P. “Kate” Kasun, U.S. Army;
Commandant, Joint Forces Staff College

The national security challenges the United States faces demand us to continually look at new ways of teaching our deploying forces. It is important to provide them with a level of understanding of the cultural, historic, and human aspects of the area in which they will operate. Having personally served in both Afghanistan and Iraq, I am convinced of the importance of educating all who intend to deploy in support of operations. Some level of awareness of the regional and local culture should be shared not only for the military but contractors, interagency, and non-government agencies as well.

Since 2002, Commander Aboul-Enein has provided students attending the Joint Forces Staff College and the faculty with a foundation in the nuances of Islam, Militant Islamist ideology, and the intricacies of modern Middle East political history. Commander Aboul-Enein’s experience and perspective enhances the overall educational experience our students receive and better equips them to meet the challenges they will face as they deploy to serve as critical campaign planners.

I am pleased to introduce the eighth essay highlighting the work of Dr. Ali al-Wardi (hereafter referred to as al-Wardi). Al-Wardi’s multivolume work, in Arabic, provides a historical narrative of Iraqi history from the Ottoman period to the founding of

the Iraqi nation-state. This current essay exposes the fascinating rise of the Hashemite dynasty of Hussein ibn Ali, the Sherief of Mecca, and the seeds of the 1916 Arab Revolt. Additionally, the essay discusses the Hashemite rival in Arabia, the Ibn Sauds, whose descendents would eventually triumph and found modern Saudi Arabia. Al-Wardi offers details on the origins of appointing the descendants of Prophet Muhammad to govern Mecca, and the Ottoman policy of selecting which of those descendants would govern Islam's holiest site on its behalf. Readers are in for a few surprises such as the first signs of Ottoman decline in Arabia began not in Mecca during World War I, but in Yemen in 1911. This exploration of al-Wardi's history allows us to cultivate the empathy needed to operate in Iraq. I applaud *Armor* for providing Commander Aboul-Enein a forum for this work.

For those readers who qualify during their career, I hope to see you at the Joint Forces Staff College, where we cultivate the critical thinking that is required to conceive and apply joint solutions on the twenty-first-century battlefield. Understanding that battlefield includes discussing and analyzing Arabic authors like Dr. al-Wardi.

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter we examined al-Wardi's views on the aftermath of the 1920 Revolt, and the negotiations that led to the formation of the Iraqi monarchy under King Feisal I. This chapter will delve into al-Wardi's writings that explore the periphery of Iraq, that influenced and shaped the history of the country.

One issue al-Wardi discusses is that of the Ottoman representatives of Mecca, known as the sheriefs of Mecca, descendants of Prophet Muhammad (or Hashemites), whom the Ottomans designated as nominal heads of Islam's holiest city. This volume delves into such subjects as the Wahhabis, rivalry between the Hashemites (rulers of Jordan, Iraq, and Mecca), and Ibn Saud, as well as his Wahhabis in the Najd. Al-Wardi includes an excellent biography of Sherief Hussein ibn Ali, the sherief of Mecca, whose sons Feisal and Abdullah would become rulers of Iraq and Jordan, respectively. He also delves into Prince Feisal's rise and fall as king of Syria between 1918 and 1920.

This chapter first will address the Ottoman rise and decline of power in Arabia before World War I that led to rebellions in Yemen, and then will address the infamous 1916 Arab Revolt in Mecca. The final chapters will conclude with Prince Feisal's short-lived monarchy in Syria, the decline of the Hashemites as rulers of Mecca and the Hijaz region of Arabia, and the final triumph of Ibn Saud, as well as the challenges Ibn Saud would face consolidating his hold on the Arabian Peninsula.

As we near the end of this book, it is important to stress the need to educate our combat forces using Arabic sources. Al-Wardi's volumes need to be translated into English in their entirety and made available to America's military leaders deploying to Iraq, and to those who are involved in stabilizing the country. It is hoped that this multipart exposé forms the basis to advocate the need to translate, highlight, and discuss Arabic works of military significance.

THE SHERIEFS OF MECCA: RULERS OF ISLAM'S HOLiest CITY FROM 939 TO 1925

Iraqi leaders are tied tribally by a network of alliances reaching into Arabia. During and after World War I, these leaders would see the emergence of two factions as the Hashemite and Ibn Saud struggled for dominance of the Arabian Peninsula. The rivalry between the two was not only over territory, but also over their ideological differences. The Hashemite vision was of a Pan-Arab dream encompassing Arabia, Jordan, Iraq, and even Syria, united by descendants of Muhammad. Ibn Saud wanted to consolidate his rule as absolute leader of the Arabian Peninsula, with a tacit agreement, negotiated for legitimacy by Ibn Saud's forefathers, to propagate the Wahhabi form of Salafi (fundamentalist) Sunni Islam.

Al-Wardi discusses Islamic viewpoints on the status of the descendants of Prophet Muhammad, and thereby the authority of the created position of sherief of Mecca. Sunni Muslims generally respect the Prophet's descendants, whereas Shiite Muslims revere Muhammad's descendants. However, Islam and Muhammad himself opposed a class system, and the Prophet's family creates a class of Muslims based solely on the relationship to the Prophet and not individual piety. In addition, there was definitional disagreements over the meaning Ala Muhammad (family of Muhammad), or more precisely Ahl-al-Bayt (literally family of the household of the Prophet). This could mean

Muhammad's family or it could mean the followers of Muhammad and not his immediate family, as interpreted in Quran 33:33. The position of sherief of Mecca derived from Muhammad's descendants was established in 969 CE, more than three centuries after Muhammad's death, by the Fatimids, a Shiite dynasty that ruled from Egypt. The first person descended from Muhammad to assume the position of sherief of Mecca was Jafar ibn al-Hassan, who would also assume the position *vali* of the Hijaz. The Fatimids created the position in a political maneuver, cultivating Muhammad's descendants and thereby undermining their rivals the Abbasids governing from Baghdad. The Abbasids responded to this maneuver by sending an emissary, Hussein ibn Musa, to Fatimid-controlled Mecca to represent Iraqi pilgrimage interests. Hussein ibn Musa had a main mission: to convince Jafar ibn al-Hassan, the cleric in charge of the grand mosque of Mecca, to resume reading his blessings from Mecca on the household of the Abbasids in addition to the Fatimids.

Al-Wardi's book continues to discuss every person occupying the position of sherief of Mecca, and mentions Abu al-Futuh who ruled Mecca in 994 CE as one of the greatest sheriefs of Mecca. Al-Futuh was a poet, warrior, and religious scholar. He fought his uncles in Medina and Yemen, consolidating his authority over the Hijaz. He coveted being the single absolute caliph and viewed with disdain three caliphates in the Muslim world of the period: the Fatimids in Egypt, the Abbasids in Iraq, and the Umayyads in Spain. Abu al-Futuh was a Shiite, and would rebel against the Shiite caliphate in Egypt, leading a large Bedouin army in an attempt to conquer the Levant. His army would be pushed back.

Of note, in 1023 CE an Egyptian Shiite pilgrim attacked the Black Stone, the only stone of the Kaaba original to Abraham; the pilgrim had split it into three pieces before he was killed by a Yemeni onlooker. This event led to a riot between Egyptian pilgrims and others in the vicinity of the Kaaba. As a result of this riot, in 1042 CE the sherief of Mecca Zeid ibn Muhsin banned Shiites from Mecca; until 1743 Shiites were viewed as defilers of the Kaaba.

The Ottoman caliphate by the late eighteenth century controlled the Hijaz, the area of Arabia that includes Mecca, that was once ruled by the Fatimids and Abbasids. Persian ruler Nadir Shah concluded an agreement with the Ottomans to resume Shiite pilgrimage to Mecca in 1743. The sherief of Mecca Masood ibn Saeed received the Shiite religious dignitaries; however, the public

was not ready for Shiite preachers in Mecca, and the Turkish administrator of Mecca called for the death of the Shiite religious representatives.

SHERIEF OF MECCA AND THE WAHHABIS

Sherief Masood ibn Saeed would determine Wahhabi doctrine as heretical, and ban them from making the hajj, a ban that would last until 1788. It would be sherief of Mecca Ghalib ibn Masood who would conclude a truce with the Wahhabis allowing them access to Mecca. In 1802, with a truce concluded on their western flank and access to Mecca, the Wahhabis raided northwards and sacked Karbala. With the riches looted from shrines in Karbala and general looting of the markets of the city, the Wahhabis felt confident enough to break their truce with the sherief of Mecca; they took over the city of Taif and viciously massacred the populace. Before 1798 the sherief of Mecca Ghalib ibn Masood had led military incursions into Najd to demonstrate his military power among the Wahhabis. From 1802 onward, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud, ancestor of the modern founder of Saudi Arabia, wanted to exploit his gains in Taif to take Mecca and the seaport town of Jeddah. The Wahhabis briefly took Mecca in 1803, demolishing the tombs (now shrines) of Prophet Muhammad's companions and birthplaces. The tomb of Muhammad's first wife Khadija bint Khuwailid was destroyed and many domed mausoleums were leveled. The Wahhabis viewed the veneration of these tombs as reverence for the dead, a form of idolatry, and as detracting from the worship of God, who alone deserved reverence without intercessors or icons. Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud ordered the destruction of water pipes, tobacco, and musical instruments, and banned burials with headstones. They imposed the teachings of Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab (1703–1792), founder of Wahhabism, on the populace of Mecca. The Wahhabis held Mecca for only a few months before being driven out, forcing them to lay siege to the holy city. The Wahhabi siege of Mecca would fail, and Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud withdrew his forces into the Najd. In 1804 he attempted to lay siege to Mecca again, and again failed. In 1806 Sherief Ghalib ibn Masood concluded a truce with the Wahhabis but they began to force their doctrines on the populace and Mecca's leaders.

When the pilgrimage season came, the Wahhabis warned Egyptian pilgrims carrying the *kiswa* (cloth covering of the Kaaba) not to bring this annual tribute next pilgrimage season. (The *kiswa* was made annually in Egypt, and

placed in a ceremonial carrier, called the *mahmal*. This would then be ceremonially escorted from Egypt to the Levant and finally to Arabia and Mecca at the start of the pilgrimage season.) True to their word, in 1807 the Wahhabis, who were then in temporary control of Mecca, attacked the *mahmal* procession, burning the carrier and the ceremonial cover of the Kaaba. The Wahhabis then imposed further bans on unbearded pilgrims from entering Mecca. Egyptian, Syrians, and Iraqis boycotted Mecca, and Ibn Saud along with the Wahhabis would destroy tombs in Medina, leaving the Prophet's tomb, but robbing it of all its tribute.

DESTRUCTION OF THE FIRST SAUDI STATE (1744–1818)

In 1808 Ottoman sultan Mahmood II ordered his Egyptian Viceroy, Muhammad Ali Pasha, to address the Wahhabi nuisance. In 1811 Muhammad Ali Pasha's older son Tousson Pasha secured Jeddah, Mecca, and Medina, with the help of European-trained forces and cannons. Captured Wahhabi leaders were sent to Cairo. Viceroy Muhammad Ali Pasha visited the Hijaz region, and Ibn Saud offered ransom money of 100,000 silver riyals for the return of Wahhabi prisoners. Muhammad Ali Pasha sent word to Ibn Saud that he would release the prisoners if Ibn Saud returned the treasures looted from Prophet Muhammad's tomb. Muhammad Ali then sent some of the Wahhabi prisoners to the Ottoman sultan, where they were paraded in the streets of Istanbul and then executed.

In 1803 the sherief of Mecca Ghalib ibn Masood was exiled by the Ottoman sultan to the island of Salonika off the Greek coast for making a truce with the Wahhabis, where he died in 1816. Also dying from illness in 1816 was Tousson Pasha; he died while on military campaign to subjugate the Wahhabis. His younger adopted brother Ibrahim Pasha arrived in the port town of Yenbu, utterly defeating the Wahhabis in 1818. He used a combination of force and swaying tribes to switch alliances. Ibrahim Pasha would obey his father's order to level the capital of the first Saudi state, Dir'iyah in the Najd, a year later. Egyptian rule over the Hijaz and dominance of Arabia would last from 1819 to 1840.

The Ottoman and Egyptian rulers altered the power structure of Mecca's rulers: the sherief of Mecca shared rule with an appointed Ottoman *vali*. The Hashemite clan that was Prophet Muhammad's family had two subclans (the

Zawi Zaid and the Zawi Awn) that competed among each other for Ottoman and Egyptian favor and the appointment of sherief of Mecca. The Ottomans ensured that compliant sheriefs ruled Mecca, a system that would last until the 1908 appointment by Ottoman sultan Abdul Hamid II of Hussein ibn Ali as sherief of Mecca. In 1908 Hussein sent his older son Abdullah to be among two representatives of Mecca in the newly established Ottoman parliament. In 1910 the conflict between Sherief Hussein ibn Ali, of the Hashemites, and Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud, the founder of modern-day Saudi Arabia, would begin. Al-Wardi discusses how the initial rivalry between the two was one in which Ibn Saud played a weaker and subordinate role while he consolidated his power in the Najd. Both observed Ottoman reaction to the Idrisi Rebellion in Yemen to gauge how autonomous they could be in their relationship with the Ottoman Empire.

ASIR (YEMEN) EXPEDITION TO SUPPRESS THE IDRISI REBELLION

In 1904 Yahya ibn Muhammad was installed as imam of the Zaydi sect of Shiites in Yemen and began a rebellion against Sunni Ottoman domination. Although the rebellion was contained, the Italians began arming the rebels. This undermined the Ottomans and led to a renewed momentum in the rebellion. This is a little-studied aspect of pre-World War I power rivalries between the Italians and Ottomans as played out in Yemen. Yemeni Saydi Muhammad al-Idrisi led a robust insurrection against the Ottomans, supported from the sea by Italian naval gunfire. This rebellion was suppressed in 1911, but also resulted in more autonomy for the Idrisi clan. Yemen was eventually able to declare an independent imamate in 1918. The Ottomans would continue to rely on regular forces, supplemented by tribal levies provided by Sherief Hussein. While Sherief Hussein's forces were occupied in Yemen, Ibn Saud attempted to seize Mecca, and three Ottoman regular battalions had to push back Ibn Saud's incursion in 1910. The way the Ottomans handled the insurrection revealed to Sherief Hussein that

- the Ottomans were not reliable guarantors of his power in Mecca, and that Ottoman forces barely thwarted the Wahhabi incursion into the Hijaz and Mecca;

- the Ottomans marginalized his authority in favor of the Turkish civil-military governor of Mecca; and that
- with an infusion of Italian support, the Yemenis had gained autonomy from the Ottomans despite Yemeni tribal forces being defeated in the field.

It became apparent that the Ottomans were weakening, leading tribal confederations such as Ibn Saud's and Sherief Hussein's (the Hashemites) to reexamine their relationships with the Ottoman sultan. Al-Wardi discusses the train of thought that would lead Sherief Hussein to contact the British in February 1914.

FIRST BRITISH CONTACT WITH SHERIEF HUSSEIN IBN ALI OF MECCA

Sherief Hussein's first contact with the British, contact that led to the 1916 Arab Revolt, was a series of meetings, correspondence, and messages between Hussein, his sons, and British officials in Egypt. Hussein's son Prince Abdullah made a trip from Mecca to Istanbul in 1914 and stopped in Cairo to pay his respects to Egypt's ruler, the *khedive* Abbas Hilmi I. Egypt's ruler hosted Abdullah in Abdin Palace. Egypt had been a British protectorate since 1882, so the British high commissioner in Egypt, Horatio Kitchener, and his liaison officer, Ronald Storrs, arranged a meeting with Abdullah to discuss the affairs of Arabia. These initial conversations centered on Ottoman relations with Prince Abdullah's father and Turkish plans to replace Hussein as sherief of Mecca. Abdullah asked what the British position would be should his father rebel against the Ottomans. Because this was months before the outbreak of World War I, the official British position was that this was an internal Ottoman matter. Storrs and Prince Abdullah engaged in endless hours of nighttime discussions on Arabic literature, and pre-Islamic poetry, however. Abdullah asked if the British could provide heavy machine guns, to which Storrs answered that indeed the British could supply such weapons to friendly allies for self-defense if his father requested it. This was a nuanced answer, basically saying that the British would arm the sherief of Mecca, because they would technically be equipping an Ottoman vassal for self-defense. Of course, should relations with the Ottomans and British change, as they would in 1914, this

cloak could be lifted ever so slowly, and the sherief of Mecca could be a British ally in what would become World War I. Every time Abdullah visited Egypt he saw Storrs and they talked of Arabic poetry, chess, and options Britain would take if certain scenarios played out with the Ottomans. These talks occurred in the Egyptian ruler's palace and in a side room atop the Egyptian newspaper *al-Muqatam* (named for the hills surrounding Cairo) and would be the seeds of the 1916 Arab Revolt.

WORLD WAR I BREAKS OUT AND SIDES ARE TAKEN

In August 1914, sides began to form in the aftermath of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand that started World War I. That month would lead to a solidification of talks between Storrs and Abdullah. Lord Kitchener was in England at the outbreak of the war on vacation, and was named war minister. Storrs wrote to Kitchener, asking for consideration in Britain supporting the Arab cause for autonomy from the Ottoman Empire, should that empire side with Germany against Britain and France. Kitchener's answer came a month later. Storrs was authorized to approach Abdullah's father Hussein in order to ascertain the sherief of Mecca's position should the Ottomans side with the Germans. Between 1914 and 1915, Storrs detailed an Egyptian messenger, Ali Asghar, as a courier and communications conduit between him and Hussein. As a Muslim and thus having access to Mecca, Asghar would deliver messages personally to the sherief. These exchanges resulted in an understanding that should the Ottomans violate its neutrality, Britain would provide material support for the Arabs to gain autonomy from the Turks. In November 1914 the Ottomans sided with the Germans in a ruse involving the transfer of German battle cruisers that began shelling Russian ports in the Black Sea. The Ottomans called on the sherief of Mecca to declare a jihad on Britain. The sherief prayed for an Ottoman triumph over the infidels, but expressed concern that a public declaration would lead to the British fleet shelling Red Sea coastal towns. The British could easily blockade ports along the Red Sea. A blockade would lead to starvation that could cause a general riot and even tribal uprisings. The Ottomans grew impatient with Hussein and sought to remove him as sherief of Mecca. In February 1915 the Ottoman civil-military governor of Mecca Weheb Pasha's personal bag was lost as he traveled from Mecca to Medina. The bag was found by a Bedouin, who took it to the Sherief

Hussein of Mecca. It was an intelligence coup for Hussein: it contained personal papers outlining Ottoman intent to remove him from his position as sherief of Mecca.

Hussein sent his other son, Prince Feisal, to the Levant in order to assess the strength and seriousness of the Arab nationalist movement. Feisal was to continue his journey from the Levant to Istanbul to present his complaint before the sultan of a conspiracy by Weheb Pasha to remove him. After spending four weeks in Syria, talking to Arab nationalists of such secret societies as al-Ahd, Feisal also spent time with the commander of the 4th Ottoman Army and governor of Syria, Djemal Pasha. Feisal's mission in Istanbul presenting his father's case against Weheb was a success, and Weheb was replaced by a more pliant and passive leader, Ghalib Pasha. Among Syria's Arab nationalists, six leaders swore fealty to Sherief Hussein and worked to sway the officers of the 12th Ottoman Division that contained the most concentration of Arabs to support the nationalist cause. Feisal, keeping with protocol, asked permission from Ottoman Djemal Pasha to leave the Levant, traveling from Damascus to Jerusalem, where Djemal was, to request his leave.

MCMAHON-HUSSEIN CORRESPONDENCE

In modern-day Middle East political history there are certain agreements, declarations, and letters that stir up much controversy. There is, for instance, the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement that carved up the Ottoman Middle East into spheres of British, French, and Russian influence, and the 1917 Balfour Declaration that established a Jewish state in Palestine but not at the expense of the indigenous peoples. The correspondence between the British high commissioner in Egypt, Sir Henry McMahon, and Sherief Hussein of Mecca would rank among those controversial documents in the tragic history of the modern-day Middle East. Al Wardi outlines the ten letters exchanged between McMahon and Hussein, five letters each. The five letters from McMahon were riddled with flourishes and platitudes and lacking any real commitment to Arab nationalist aspirations. Hussein read these platitudes as a tacit agreement for an Arab state the encompassed all of Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Jordan, and Arabia. The diplomatic ambiguity would have dire consequences for the future of the Middle East. In early 1916 Prince Feisal left with fifty horsemen to Damascus; this contingent participated in an assault to gain control of the

Suez Canal, Britain's lifeline to India. Djemal Pasha viewed this contribution with contempt and made Feisal his permanent guest (read: glorified hostage) until his father sent more troops. Feisal spent five months in Damascus, but he did not waste his time, instead managing the criticisms against his father by Djemal Pasha and visiting War Minister Ali Fouad Bey, diverting attention from Hussein's talks with McMahon. Despite being a hostage, Feisal held a massive banquet in honor of Djemal Pasha.

Feisal was not entirely in the British camp and hoped for reconciliation with the Ottoman sultan; however, several Arab nationalists were caught, and Feisal interceded with Djemal Pasha to free them. Instead, seven were hung in Damascus and fourteen were hung in Beirut. This transformed Feisal and he became even more committed to ridding Arabia and the greater Middle East of Ottoman suzerainty. Feisal received orders from his father to depart Damascus because the revolt against the Ottomans was about to start. Feisal left Damascus under a ruse, telling Djemal Pasha he had to meet fighters amassing in Medina and ride at their head to Damascus in preparation for the second Sinai assault. The first assault occurred in 1915, in the first months of the Ottoman declaration of war, and pitted 25,000 Ottoman troops against 30,000 British Expeditionary Forces troops pushing the Ottomans back. Djemal did not trust Feisal or his father and sent Gen. Fakhri Pasha to take over the garrison of three thousand troops in Medina. Djemal also ordered those troops to remain in Medina and not deploy to Yemen as originally planned. Mecca thus had 1,200 troops when the 1916 Arab Revolt began in June. The revolt would be sustained by the British to include such famous officers as T. E. Lawrence who advised Prince Feisal, John Glubb who advised Prince Abdullah, and Harry St. John Philby who advised Ibn Saud.

CONCLUSION

Al-Wardi concedes that much has been written about the 1916 Arab Revolt, and limits his own chapter to the events leading up to the revolt. He points out that many of the Ottoman regulars who defected to the Arab nationalist cause were Iraqis, and would form the core of returning officers who eventually created Iraq's modern army. There are many recent recommended books if you are interested in furthering your understanding of the 1916 Arab Revolt and T. E. Lawrence, to include the unconventional tactics used in tying down

tens of thousands of Ottoman forces and neutralizing their threat on British Egypt. The revolt also allowed Gen. Edmund Allenby to push towards Jerusalem and Damascus and to defeat the 4th Ottoman Army in the Battle of Megiddo in September 1918. (The 1916 Arab Revolt secured Allenby's right flank.) Al-Wardi focuses much of the second book of Volume 6 on Prince Feisal's short-lived rule over Syria. Arab and British forces arrived in Damascus simultaneously and a new phase of the conflict began over control of the Levant. This history is vital in educating America's combat forces, as it provides a sense of the human terrain in an area of strategic importance to the United States.

9

PRINCE FEISAL IBN HUSSEIN (1918–1921)

FROM KING OF SYRIA TO KING OF IRAQ

Foreword by Mr. Ed Mornston, Director, Joint Intelligence
Task Force for Combating Terrorism (JITF-CT)

The twenty-first-century national security challenges facing the United States require a new way of educating, teaching, and shaping our combat forces. Increasingly, we require soldiers to possess significant knowledge of a region, and its history, tribes, sociological, and religious characteristics. This knowledge, sometimes referred to as “human terrain,” is emerging as an important tool that is as critical to understanding foreign lands as physical terrain and topography. Knowing the human terrain gives our military units insights into the population and its culture; it enhances operational effectiveness, bolsters force protection, and helps reduce conflict. It is key to executing counterinsurgency strategy. Commander Aboul-Enein has worked tirelessly to educate our deploying units on the nuances of Middle East history, Islam, and the diverse view points of 1.5 billion Muslims, and the intricacies of militant Islamist ideology.

This book, which introduces the Father of Iraqi Sociology, Dr. Ali al-Wardi, is a valuable contribution to our understanding of Iraq and its neighboring countries. Commander Aboul-Enein’s review of al-Wardi’s supplement to Volume 6 of his *Social Aspects of Iraqi Modern Society* focuses on the rise and fall of Prince Feisal ibn Hussein as King of Syria from 1918–1920. His forcible eviction from Syria by French forces would leave a scar not only on

Feisal, who later would become King of Iraq from 1921 to 1933, but also a scar on the collective political psychology of the Levant. Understanding the origins and ongoing historical narratives of this scar tissue, from an Iraqi point of view, is an example of studying Iraq's human terrain. Such empathy is necessary for a military unit to operate effectively in a very complex battlespace.

I applaud *Armor* for devoting significant space in several editions of their journal to highlight this important multivolume work. As part of the Defense Intelligence Agency's Joint Intelligence Task Force for Combating Terrorism, we utilize the entire set of *Armor's* collection to educate our analysts deploying to Iraq so that they may benefit from the service Commander Aboul-Enein and *Armor* have rendered in translating, analyzing, and highlighting this Arabic work of military significance.

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 8 discussed al-Wardi's views on the decline of Hussein ibn Ali, the sherief of Mecca, and the political capital he amassed in the aftermath of the 1916 Arab Revolt, making himself king of the Hijaz. This led to the rise of Ibn Saud, and the seeds of the creation of modern-day Saudi Arabia. This chapter will focus on Hussein ibn Ali's son Feisal ibn Hussein, who eventually would become king of Iraq (see Chapter 7 for details on the ascension of Feisal ibn Hussein as king of Iraq), during his time as king of Syria from 1918 to 1920. His eviction as king of Syria by French forces in the Battle of Maysalun impacted the political psychology of Feisal, and left a deep internal mark on the region when he ascended the throne of Iraq.

DYNAMICS OF THE 1916 ARAB REVOLT CHANGES FROM ALLY TO CHALLENGER

The collapse of the Ottoman 7th and 8th Armies in the Battle of Megiddo was the death knell of Ottoman power in the Middle East. This laid open British forces' advancement to the Levant and Damascus. The 1916 Arab Revolt, under Prince Feisal ibn Hussein, aided in the envelopment in the Jezreel Valley. In a twist of historic irony, this is also the site of the Battle of Armageddon mentioned in the Book of Revelations. This history was not lost

on British forces as they dismantled Ottoman military might in the Levant. Al-Wardi is extremely light on the actual tactics of the Battle of Megiddo and other military campaigns, but does a marvelous job discussing the political and social impact of wars fought in the Levant, Iraq, and Arabia. (If you are interested in the tactical intricacies of the Ottoman battles with British forces in World War I, consult the works of the late Cyril B. Falls, especially his official two-volume history, *Military Operations: Egypt and Palestine* [1928]. A delightful 2005 paper published by the Air University Press and written by Maj. Gregory Daddis, U.S. Army, “Armageddon’s Lost Lessons,” is also a recommended read.)

Damascus lay open and the Ottomans were no longer a threat, and so a new phase in the relationship between the British and the 1916 Arab Revolt developed. Gen. Edmund Allenby wanted to enter Damascus with Prince Feisal and his irregular Arab army in order to be portrayed as an ally of the Arabs, not a conqueror. This was not to be. Instead, a race between British divisions and the 1916 Arab Revolt ensued, with both forces arriving within hours of each other in October 1918. Technically, the tribes representing Prince Feisal, the Howeitat, the Ruwailah, and the Druze entered Damascus from the south, while Australian cavalry scouts entered the city from the west. Along with the forces of the 1916 Arab Revolt were the former Ottoman officers of Iraqi origin: Nuri al-Said, Nuri Shaalan of the Ruwailah, Auda Abu Taii of the Howeitat, and finally Sultan al-Atrash of the Druze; these Arab leaders were joined by the famous Maj. T. E. Lawrence. They claimed Damascus for Prince Feisal and his father Hussein ibn Ali of Mecca. Feisal was declared king of Syria that same month.

Al-Wardi reveals an unexpected power center in Damascus that supported the Arab claim of Damascus: the grandsons of the famous Algerian resistance leader, Abdel-Kader, who tenaciously fought the French occupation of Algeria in 1832 and lost. By 1918 his descendants had hundreds of North African followers who brought law and order to Damascus. T. E. Lawrence despised these North Africans; in return they attempted to incite his murder. Looting was rampant and would only be controlled when regular officers of the 1916 Arab Revolt opened fire on looters with heavy machine guns. These killings usually would have led to tribal vendettas, but because this was done in the name of order and *adl* (justice) they were viewed as executions; no shame

was attached to the killing of looters. Although al-Wardi does not discuss this point, it is likely that Arab-on-Arab violence is viewed as more palatable than British-on-Arab violence.

BRITISH GENERAL ALLENBY ARRIVES IN DAMASCUS

British commander General Allenby arrived in Damascus on October 3, 1918, and arranged for a meeting with Prince Feisal at the Hotel Victoria. This was where he outlined the details of the Sykes-Picot Agreement. According to this agreement, Syria, to include Damascus, was allocated as a French sphere of influence. Allenby explained to Feisal that he could rule Syria temporarily on behalf of the French, and that it would include only greater Syria, and not Lebanon or Palestine. In al-Wardi's account, General Allenby turned to T. E. Lawrence and asked if he had informed Feisal of the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Lawrence responded in the negative, and added that he did not know of the agreement. Feisal, who was visibly upset, objected to this imposed agreement. In response, General Allenby decided to take a military approach, ending the meeting by saying to Feisal that he (Allenby) was commander in chief and that Feisal was a general under his command, and Feisal was to obey orders until this matter was sorted out.

As a result of this meeting and Allenby's high-handedness with Prince Feisal, T. E. Lawrence asked to resign from military service and to return to England. He had spent two years among the Arabs, and an even longer time traveling throughout the Middle East before, during, and after World War I. Lawrence, known as "Lawrence of Arabia" before departing Syria, had become a household name thanks to American journalist Lowell Thomas who spent two days with him and created the Lawrence myth through articles, books, and more importantly a travelling show that sold to packed theaters. After his resignation, Lawrence devoted himself to advising Prince Feisal at the Peace Conference at Versailles, sending a cable to the shierief of Mecca, Feisal's father, recommending that Feisal represent Arab interests in Versailles.

FEISAL IN FRANCE: INTRIGUES OF THE VERSAILLES CONFERENCE (1919)

Feisal, Lawrence, and Nuri al-Said departed from Beirut for Paris in late October 1918. Arriving in Marseilles five days later, Feisal was received by French

colonel Edouard Bremond. The French military officer, who served in pacifying North Africa and who had a thorough grasp of Arabic, told Feisal that while France welcomed him as an honored guest, it did not recognize Feisal in any diplomatic capacity. Bremond then turned to Lawrence and said to him that he welcomed Lawrence as a serving British officer, but could not continue to extend a welcome if he did not wear his appropriate uniform and discard his Arab robes. Lawrence grew angry, returned the high French decorations that had been awarded him, and left for England.

In January 1919 Feisal departed France for England. During his time in England, he met King George V and was awarded the Victoria Cross. He also met with Chaim Weizman, where Feisal and he discussed prospects of a Jewish presence in Palestine. The meeting between Weizman and Feisal is the subject of much mythology, but al-Wardi provides a scholarly Arabic perspective. According to al-Wardi, Feisal agreed to the integration of Jews in Palestine only if the Arabs were given self-determination and independence in Arabia and the Levant, to include Lebanon and Palestine. These were impossible requests to meet in light of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, however.

Feisal returned to Paris after his visit to England to prepare for the Versailles Conference that would begin in early January 1919. After Feisal's formal request to attend the conference was rebuffed, he was assigned two seats by British Prime Minister Lloyd George as part of the British delegation. The British and the Arabs both wanted to renegotiate the terms of Sykes-Picot Agreement. The British were eying parts of what is now Mosul to merge it with Iraq instead of Syria. It was deemed that Mosul would provide a more economically viable British mandate as part of Iraq. The presence of the Arabs under Feisal could provide an opportunity for the British to play the Arabs against the French and possibly gain Mosul. Prince Feisal, although marginalized in the actual conference, did get a chance to address the conference and amplify the Arab contribution to the war effort. Feisal's remarks on Arab sacrifices made the difference in delaying France's plan to annex Syria. Instead, the conference attendees assigned a commission, known as the Crane Commission, to look into the desires of the local populace. During the conference, Feisal made many influential friends to include Woodrow Wilson's wife, Edith Wilson (formerly Edith Gault), and French author Anatole France. These new friends also advocated for Arab self-determination.

Feisal did not linger in France. He rapidly made his way back to Syria to prepare the populace for the arrival of the Crane Commission. The Commission affirmed Feisal to be monarch of greater Syria only, and asserted the independence of Lebanon from Syria. The Crane Commission's findings meant nothing, as France simply swapped Mosul to Britain for British support for France's right to assume the mandate over the rest of Syria and Lebanon. Feisal's days were numbered as the self-proclaimed king of Syria. As hard-liners and procolonialists took power in France, assigning the hawkish Gen. Henri Gouraud as commissioner general of Beirut, Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau was voted out of office in January 1920 in favor of Alexandre Millerand, a socialist who leaned towards the conservatives to balance a tenuous governing coalition.

FEISAL'S MINISTERS IN SYRIA: CHALLENGES AND ULTIMATUMS

In Syria, King Feisal's first cabinet was preoccupied with an imminent French invasion. They also dealt with sectarian violence between Lebanon's Christians and Shiites, stimulated by the French arming Christians and the Sunnis and Shiites were armed by members supportive of King Feisal. French forces intervened in these sectarian massacres in Lebanon and demanded from Feisal that

- (1) all railways in Syria and Lebanon be placed under French control;
- (2) the compulsory draft be abolished;
- (3) he accept the French mandate over Syria and Lebanon;
- (4) he punish those stoking sectarian violence; and
- (5) he impose French currency in the Levant.

Feisal, believing that he had no choice, accepted the ultimatum, which led to rioting in Damascus and other parts of Syria. A Syrian cleric, Rashid Rida, incited religious opposition to the French and to Feisal. Rida later would be exiled to Egypt, where he stimulated a young Hassan al-Banna who would go on to establish the Muslim Brotherhood, the first Islamist political party, in 1928. This Ikhwan al-Muslimeen or Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood founded by al-Banna is not to be confused with the Wahhabi Ikhwan that Ibn Saud

used as shock troops. The rioting hardened Feisal's resolve against the French. Al-Wardi reports that Feisal concluded that he arrived as the conqueror of Damascus, and would leave only if he were forcibly evicted.

Another debate among Feisal's ministers in Syria was regarding the successful push of French forces from Asia Minor by Kemal Atatürk as he established the Republic of Turkey. This debate centered on whether or not to aid the Turks; with only four thousand troops and twelve cannons, however, it was decided this was not feasible. In addition, concerns arose as to whether Atatürk's forces would push deep into Syria, which might exploit the French retreat. This victory by Atatürk led to the redirection of retreating French forces towards the preservation of Syria. The objectives of the French were to show that Feisal's ministers as well as the king himself were incapable of restoring order. On July 14, 1920, a robust French force arrived and defeated an Arab army at Khan Maysalun nine days later on July 23. King Feisal headed towards the Umayyad Mosque, among Islam's earliest mosques and an architectural gem built in the late seventh century in the center of Damascus. There he called on the populace to defend Syria by raising and arming 10,000 volunteers. But this improvised irregular army was no match for French artillery, armored units, tanks, cavalry, and infantry, supported by biplanes. Youssef al-Azmah, the defense minister, along with thousands of other Arabs, died in the Battle of Maysalun on July 23, 1920. This is a seminal date among Syrian nationalists; a statue of al-Azmah can be found in downtown Damascus.

KING FEISAL EVICTED FROM SYRIA: EXAMINING HIS FAILURES (1920)

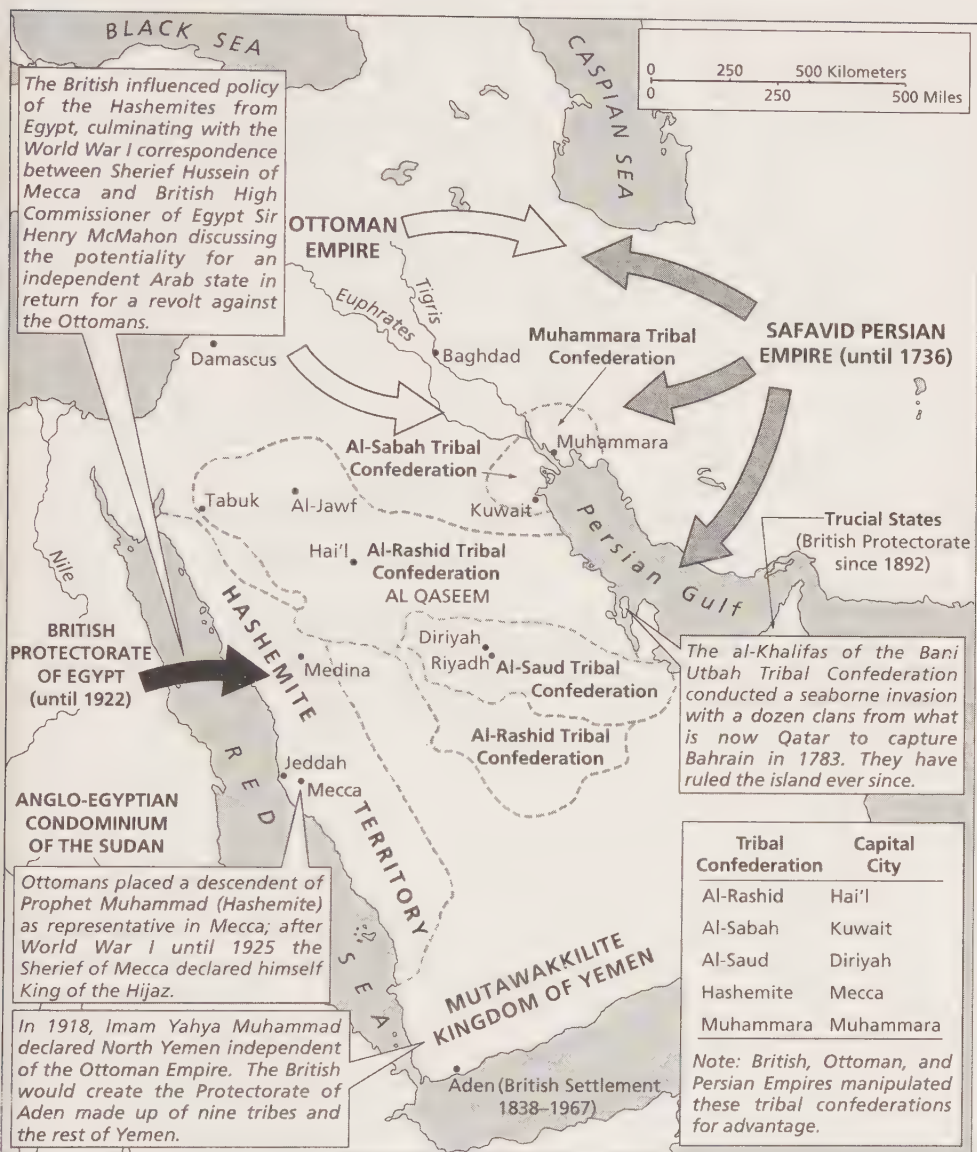
Feisal had forty-eight hours to depart Syria. He first went to Der'aa, and then Haifa. From Haifa he traveled on to Switzerland and from there to Italy. Feisal spent three months in Italy, where he paid 100 gold liras to the editor of the newspaper *Il Popolo d'Italia*, a young Benito Mussolini, to publish pro-Arab and anti-French columns. In Italy he also established contact with Turkish officials to conspire against the French. Feisal would end up in London, at the invitation of Lord Curzon, who offered him the throne of Iraq.

Al-Wardi compiles assessments from several advisers to Feisal, while he was briefly king of Syria, as to why he failed:

- Resistance by the Syrians to conscription, much like their resistance to Ottoman conscription.
- Feisal's nepotism. He assigned those close to him in the 1916 Arab Revolt to positions of authority and marginalized Syria's elite tribes and families.
- Feisal's style of running Syria like an Arabian tribal fiefdom and not recognizing the proud, urban, and civil nature of governing an ancient metropolis like Damascus. The Bedouin and urban styles of governance were widely different.
- His minister of education, Sateh Hussari, attempted to secularize Syria's education system, which quickly led to friction between the populace and King Feisal's cabinet.
- Feisal used scarce forces to pacify sectarian tensions; he was a political amateur in the hands of more experienced British policy makers and advisers.
- When Feisal proclaimed himself king of Syria in 1918, he had no agenda, platform, or plan for the country beyond Arab nationalist slogans. Some of his advisers, after the fact, questioned if he should have negotiated with the French a timetable for the mandate to end.
- Why did Feisal accept the French ultimatum, only to fight them weeks later at Khan Maysalun? This particular question haunts many Arab historians to this day. One prevalent theory among Arab historians is that King Feisal abandoned his force and fled to Jordan and then Great Britain, leaving Youssef al-Azmah to confront the French forces. Feisal's willingness to accept the French ultimatum served only to buy him time to make his escape. However, this view is not shared by al-Wardi, who insists that Feisal attempted to rally tribes and citizens at the Ummayyad Mosque in Damascus, and when this effort proved futile he made his escape.

CONCLUSION

The events that led to Feisal's rise and fall in Syria, coupled with his experiences in London, Versailles, and his temporary exile, would shape his political education. He learned valuable lessons that he would use when he assumed the throne of the newly created nation-state of Iraq. America's military plan-



MAP 4. Major Tribal Confederations That Existed in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Arabia

ners and those operating in the region will find this history relevant, as it has shaped the regional narrative and colonial victimization experienced by the Iraqi people. Since some of the labels the United States is given include imperialist, occupier, and colonialist, we should be more aware that these slogans are tied into the collective history of the region. Any attempts by the United States to counter this propaganda in the Middle East needs to include an understanding, grounding, and immersion into the history that has led to the political insecurities of this region. Therefore, it is vital that we immerse America's combat forces in the history of the region using Arabic sources in order to provide deploying units information dominance that encompasses the historic, cultural, sociological, and religious perspectives of the Middle East.

In Chapter 10 we will review al-Wardi's work on the rivalry between Hussein ibn Ali, the sherief of Mecca, and Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud, then emir of the Najd, for control of the Arabian Peninsula. This period would see the rise of Ibn Saud and the eventual creation of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Hussein, in whose name the 1916 Arab Revolt was conducted, evolved into a major liability for his sons Abdullah and Feisal, as they assumed the thrones of the newly created mandates of Jordan and Iraq, respectively.

10

THE RISE AND FALL OF HUSSEIN IBN ALI *KING OF THE HIJAZ AND SHERIEF OF MECCA*

Foreword by Ms. Denise Campbell; Director of the John T. Hughes
Library at the Defense Intelligence Agency's National
Intelligence University, Washington, DC

In the quest to understand the human landscape of a military area of operation, Foreign Area Officers, military planners, and intelligence analysts must cultivate empathy for a region and its people. Getting into the mindset of our adversaries, the population we are protecting, and developing sound counterinsurgency programs requires an understanding that transcends beyond the realm of Internet searches. What is needed is an analytic immersion offered by books, and a visit to the resources that are your military libraries. We pride ourselves at cultivating a love of analytic research at the John T. Hughes Library, as hundreds of students pursuing their graduate and undergraduate degrees in strategic intelligence write papers and prepare graduate level theses based on a year of intellectual inquiry in an area of interest to the intelligence community and the individual student. Commander Aboul-Enein has been a permanent fixture at our library, maintaining a second office among our stacks, and requesting our library staff to acquire for him obscure Arabic titles needed to understand the region. The work of Dr. Ali al-Wardi, although in Arabic, represents the types of books we acquired for those whose knowledge of the Arabic language enable them to incorporate such sources in educating our future military leaders. We at the John T. Hughes Library are pleased to be part of this project. When Commander Aboul-Enein

described the volumes of Ali al-Wardi to us; it took us under six months to acquire a set for our collection and for this review essay series. Never underestimate the capabilities of your military libraries at such places as the Pentagon, War Colleges, and major military bases. As we have done for Commander Aboul-Enein, we expend every effort to acquire books, even in such strategic languages as Arabic, through inter-library loan. In defense of our nation, no title is obscure, and I commend *Armor* for providing a forum for this important series on the Father of Iraqi Sociology.

INTRODUCTION

The personality of Hussein ibn Ali, the sherief of Mecca, is described in al-Wardi's supplement to his sixth volume of the definitive Arabic language history of Iraq. As he has done with his earlier volumes that focus on Ottoman Iraq and Persia, the supplemental volumes cover personalities and regions in the periphery of modern-day Iraq. Iraq, after World War I, was absorbed in events occurring not only within the country, but also in Arabia, Transjordan (modern-day Jordan), and Syria. The previous chapter covered Prince Feisal ibn Hussein's capture of Damascus in 1918, his declaration of himself as king of Syria, and his final eviction by French forces from Syria in 1920. This chapter covers al-Wardi's views on his father Hussein ibn Ali (hereafter referred to as Hussein), the sherief of Mecca, after World War I. It was in the name of Hussein that the 1916 Arab Revolt occurred; his sons Abdullah, Feisal, and Ali would lead forces along with T. E. Lawrence to undermine Ottoman forces in the Middle East. Yet after the war Hussein would gradually alienate many, and succumb to the forces of Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud. What al-Wardi lacks in detailed tactical information about tribal wars he makes up for in providing details on the personalities of the leaders, their psychology, fears, and styles of decision that are not generally available in Western accounts of such historic events as the 1916 Arab Revolt. Reading Arabic works of military significance like the books of al-Wardi cultivates the skill of empathy (not sympathy) for an adversary. Cultivating this empathy requires copious readings of historic accounts—readings, in the case of the Middle East, both in English and in Arabic.

KING HUSSEIN IBN ALI: A LESSON IN HUBRIS AND OVEREXAGGERATED SENSE OF SELF

Hussein is a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad through Ali, and expects his person to be revered as such. This gave him an overinflated sense of importance that would lead to an exaggerated hubris in dealing with his tribal enemies. He also possessed a fearsome temper. Al-Wardi writes that whether you were innocent or guilty and were summoned to Mecca to go ahead and write your will, because Hussein was not discerning and would likely order an execution for minor offenses. Hussein was also stubborn and did not consider alternative points of view, surrounding himself with courtiers and poets that fed into his delusions. He saw the world as he wanted it to be, and not as it actually was. As king of the Hijaz, Hussein had a hard time delegating authority to subordinates. Perhaps the most crippling weakness was his deluded sense of importance, thinking that his political opinions, particularly those published in the newspaper *al-Qibla* (The Direction, or Direction to Mecca), was being read by the great powers like Britain and France. He alienated senior Muslim clerics by declaring that his interpretation of the Quran superseded that of all other clerics in the realm. This went against the concept of *ijmaa* (consensus in matters of faith). Hussein had many delusions, such as believing all Arabs supported him, and he constantly threatened the British that he would abdicate as king of the Hijaz if they did not acquiesce to his demands. At one point Winston Churchill, then colonial secretary, replied to the threat by inquiring of Hussein who his highness' designated heir might be.

One of the most interesting aspects of al-Wardi's section on Hussein were his phobias rooted in Islamic history. It was his ancestors who were massacred at Karbala in 680 CE. Karbala is where Hussein, son of Ali ibn Abi Talib and grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, and his family along with seventy retainers were ambushed and massacred by 10,000 of Yazid ibn Muawiyah's forces while under a flag of truce. That massacre is an event commemorated by Shiite Muslims every tenth day of Muharram. More than 1,200 years later, Hussein, the king of the Hijaz, in 1921 received a cable from Iraq's notables requesting that his son Feisal be made king of Iraq. The father declared his concern that his son would meet the same fate as his ancestors in Karbala. This fear reached such a level that it took from 1923 to late 1924 for Feisal to

be reunited with his wife and oldest son Ghazi, because Hussein feared they would be massacred in Iraq.

MONEY DRIES UP FOR HUSSEIN IBN ALI

Another weakness of Hussein is the reduction of British subsidies and payments after World War I, beginning in 1920. This would lead him to tax urban centers and meddle in the affairs of merchants and craftsmen of major cities. With British subsidies drying up, Bedouins paid by Hussein began to stop receiving payments and resorted to raiding caravans, setting up tolls along roads to Mecca, Medina, Jeddah, and Taif. Members of the Harb Tribal Confederacy attacked Iraqi pilgrims, killing forty, including four women. Hussein's decision to compensate pilgrims harmed by tribal brigands added a further strain on his finances.

HUSSEIN IBN ALI OF THE HIJAZ VERSUS IBN SAUD OF THE NAJD

Hussein's pride also alienated members of his own family, such as his son Abdullah's assault on his relative Khalid ibn Luai, ruler of Taif in 1918. This physical assault over a disagreement turned Ibn Luai towards Ibn Saud in the Najd and Wahhabism. Hussein devoted scarce forces and his barely trained army of the Hijaz to securing Taif, and fighting Ibn Luai and his sponsor Ibn Saud. In 1919 when Hussein took over the Ottoman arsenal in Medina armed with large quantities of ammunition, rifles, light and heavy machine guns, and artillery, he felt strong enough to take the fight deeper into Ibn Saud's territory, the Najd. This particular campaign between Hussein and Ibn Saud in 1919 demonstrates that possessing superior weapons does not ensure victory. His son, Abdullah, warned Hussein that his forces were exhausted from laying siege to Medina and were reluctant to muster.

Feeling confident with his weapons, Hussein ordered his son to campaign in the Najd. Abdullah obeyed his father, and took an inadequate force of 850 regulars and 1,500 tribal levies armed with ten artillery pieces, and twenty light and twenty heavy machine guns. Most of the regular officers sent to fight Ibn Luai and Ibn Saud were Iraqi. Ibn Saud assembled a force of 12,000 tribal levies and 1,500 Wahhabi Ikhwan as skirmishers. The Ikhwan

skirmishers were commanded by Ibn Luai and Sultan ibn Bijad. By May 1924 Ibn Saud sent a messenger requesting that Prince Abdullah withdraw from the village of Turbah; the villages of Turbah and Khurmah were considered a tribal border between Ibn Saud and Hussein. Ibn Saud's messenger added that the Ikhwan were on the outskirts of Turbah, which angered Abdullah, leading him to order the death of the messenger.

The attack of the Ikhwan came days later; when the call of the dawn prayers were being cried out, the town of Turbah was still in darkness, and the forces of Abdullah were just waking up for prayers. The skirmishers of the Ikhwan would overwhelm the forces of Abdullah. Of the 850 regulars, only 157 survived. All the machine guns, artillery, and rifles were captured. Ibn Saud's victory at Turbah with just the fanatical Ikhwan reverberated in Mecca, Medina, Jeddah, and even in London and Cairo. Prince Abdullah barely escaped with his life, and was rescued by his uncle Zeid ibn Shakir, who provided him a horse and a camel to escape to safety.

BRITISH REACTION TO IBN SAUD'S VICTORY

The British, through their consul general in Jeddah, sent a note to Ibn Saud to withdraw his forces from the neutral villages of Turbah and Khurmah and return them to the Najd. He was warned that all agreements with the British would be voided if Ibn Saud pressed on and invaded the Hijaz. Ibn Saud had pressures from Great Britain and from his fanatical Ikhwan fighters chanting, "On to Taif!" to contend with. Ultimately, Ibn Saud restrained his fighters and maintained his hold on Turbah and Khurmah. London was surprised by the quick taking of Turbah by Ibn Saud. The British hoped that the newly created and British-trained Hijaz army could keep the balance of tribal power between Ibn Saud and Hussein. Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon consulted with Harry St. John Philby, who recommended that Ibn Saud be allowed to retain Khurmah and Turbah to placate him, but that he extract an agreement from him to cease his push into the Hijaz or his taking of the city of Taif. London sent Philby to the Najd to let Ibn Saud know of this plan, and to present this as the British position on the matter. The British had pressures from Hussein to stop the Wahhabis; in addition, after learning of the taking of Turbah and Khurmah by the Wahhabis, the cities of Mecca, Medina, and Taif

began to evacuate and an exodus of refugees packed the port city of Jeddah attempting to escape Wahhabi massacres. London discussed what could be done about Wahhabi massacres and concluded that unless they were willing to commit British regular forces there was nothing that could be done. Upon Philby's arrival in Cairo, Ibn Saud had withdrawn his forces into the Najd, and the refugees returned to Mecca, Medina, and Taif; Ibn Saud was ordered not to proceed with his mission. This was a strategic mistake, as the British threatened Ibn Saud to withdraw from Turbah and Khurmah and did not present the British follow-up position, giving the impression that London was disinterested in the affairs of Arabia and allowing Ibn Saud to keep the two neutral villages. General Allenby, the British high commissioner in Cairo, had six biplanes shipped to Jeddah to reinforce the defense of the Hijaz against the Wahhabis and Ibn Saud. Philby advised Allenby that if pilots were captured in Ibn Saud's territory they would be cut to pieces, so the planes were left in their crates in the pier of Jeddah. This was another tactical blunder that would only embolden Ibn Saud.

BATTLE OF TURBAH'S IMPACT ON HUSSEIN'S MORALE

The Battle of Turbah so impacted the morale of Hussein that he took ill, blamed his son Abdullah, and obsessed on taking revenge on Ibn Saud. Instead of taking a pragmatic approach to defend the Hijaz and making preparation to challenge Ibn Saud, he withdrew into his delusions of grandeur. Of note, Hussein negotiated with T. E. Lawrence; he wanted Iraq, Palestine, and Transjordan as part of his Arab kingdom. He wanted the Hijaz to include the southern Arabian region of Asir up to the port of Hodeida in modern-day Aden. He demanded from Lawrence that the British recognize him as first among all princes of Arabia, and for Ibn Saud to withdraw from Turbah and Khurmah. Lawrence reported on Hussein's fantasies and delusions to Lord Curzon. Despite outward appearances of obedience, Hussein's sons Feisal and Abdullah disagreed with their father politically. Hussein treated negotiations with British officials as "all or nothing," and Feisal in particular took a "give and take" approach. The sons would cut their own deals with British officials, making Abdullah emir of Transjordan and Feisal king of Iraq, much to Hussein's consternation. Hussein was engaged in fantasy thinking that the French would

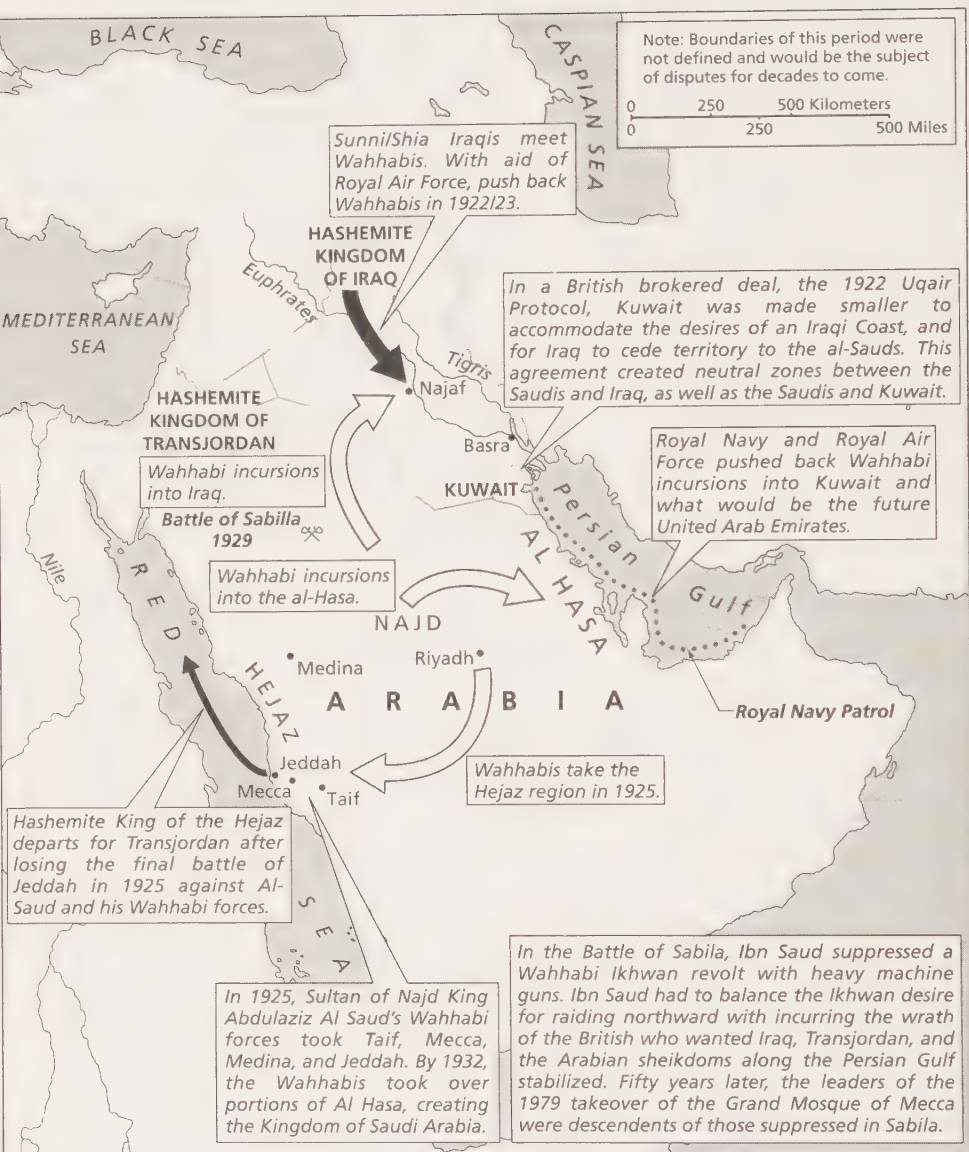
not have dared take Syria and evict Feisal in 1920 had Syria been part of his Arab kingdom and attached to the Hijaz. From 1923 onward, Hussein spent many more days in Jordan, and in 1924 his son Ali ibn Hussein took charge of running Mecca and the Hijaz. Ali ibn Hussein's reign as king of the Hijaz would be short lived, as Ibn Saud took Taif, with Wahhabis conducting a brutal massacre, the fear of which laid Mecca and Jeddah open to their conquest in 1924 and 1925, respectively.

HUSSEIN DECLARES HIMSELF CALIPH AND MAKES POWERFUL ENEMIES

The year 1924 would see the abolishing of the institution of the caliphate by Kemal Atatürk on March 1. This was a shock to the Islamic world, as the institution had been in existence since the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632 CE. Al-Wardi has an excellent dialogue between Hussein and Abdullah over the issue, with Abdullah encouraging his father to declare himself caliph. Four days after Atatürk's decision, Hussein declared himself caliph and took an oath of fealty from his sons, the rulers of Jordan and Iraq. Feisal in Iraq even engineered the Shiite Muslims in Karbala to offer fealty to his Sunni father the new caliph, arguing he was descended from the Prophet Muhammad through the line of Ali, Muhammad's cousin and revered among Shiites. This was a major coup, for the Shiites never publicly recognized the Ottoman sultan as caliph. Hussein's decision to declare himself caliph added powerful enemies plotting against him and his sons. They included Ibn Saud in the Najd and King Fouad of Egypt who coveted the title of caliph. In addition, Reza Shah of Persia did not appreciate Hussein's cultivation of Shiites, and the British did not like the idea of a caliph who could agitate the Muslim subjects in India, Malaya, Egypt, and the Sudan. In hindsight, there were hidden burdens and even dangers to declaring oneself caliph that were unforeseen by Hussein.

CONCLUSION

This portion of al-Wardi's volumes contain many lessons such as the creation of modern-day Saudi Arabia at the expense of the miscalculations, blunders, and misjudgments of Hussein. It also offers a classic tale of overreach. Hussein overreached his abilities, wanting an Arab kingdom from Iraq to Yemen,



MAP 5. Wahhabi Incursions into the Hijaz, Iraq, and the al-Hasa: British Containment of the Wahhabis

declaring himself caliph, alienating his British allies, overestimating his influence, and underestimating his adversaries. On the issue of the caliphate, in the twenty-first century militant Islamist groups such as al-Qaida yearn for the restoration of this institution as a goal, and Bin Laden made mention of the loss of the caliphate in his early speeches. But al-Qaida has a selective sense of history versus knowledge of history, which precludes them from understanding the burdens and complexities of the individuals who assumed that title from Abu Bakr in 632 CE to the Ottoman sultan Abdul-Mejid II who was deposed in 1924. The caliphate, in essence, is a political tradition and not ordained in Islam.

It is vital that America's current and future military leaders understand this little-studied history of the region as part of their education in defending America's national security interests in the region. Al-Wardi's volumes represent an Arabic work of military significance to U.S. forces that need to be translated in full, debated, and taught, so that our forces acquire information dominance in the region. The final chapter will highlight al-Wardi's details of the personality and rise of Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud and his creation of modern-day Saudi Arabia.

In February 2011 the then deputy al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri chose to observe the Egyptian youth movement that toppled Hosni Mubarak by giving a historic monologue on the caliphate. While al-Zawahiri's message did not resonate with the new and younger generation of militant Islamists, it is still important for counterterrorism experts to understand this history, to highlight what pieces of the narrative al-Zawahiri included and omitted, and to provide a modern interpretation of this history. An example of al-Zawahiri's selective use of history was his reference to Col. Ahmed Urabi who did not just use Islamic language to conduct the Urabi Revolt, but also was above all an ardent Egyptian nationalist who hated British colonialism of Egypt and who despised the Ottoman class system that treated Egyptians as second-class citizens in their own country. This Ottoman caliphate that treated Arabs and Egyptians as second-class citizens is the same Ottoman caliphate Zawahiri champions and is an example among many of his use of fragments of history and religion to weave a militant Islamist narrative.

THE RISE OF IBN SAUD AND DECLINE OF HASHEMITES IN ARABIA

Foreword by Ms. Charlotte Bourgeois, Editor in Chief,
Armor, U.S. Army Journal

This is the final essay in the series introducing America's military leaders to the writings and teachings of the father of Iraqi sociology. Whether this is the first article you will read in the series, or have read all previous writings in *Armor* since the initial piece in the March–April 2009 edition, you should benefit equally by this introduction of warriors, leaders, customs, traditions, and battles not regularly studied in western military schools. In previous articles, the landscape of Iraq's history from before the sixteenth century was drawn with precision and detail. Of particular historical relevance were the wars between Safavid Persia and the Ottoman Empire; the Ottoman Empire and Iraq's Shiites and Sunni tribes; the Ottoman and the British Empires; and raids from central Arabia and into Iraq by the Wahhabis that began in 1802 and ended in 1927. Iraqis have also watched from the sidelines as events in Syria, Arabia, and World War I significantly changed and influenced their lives directly. America's military leaders are lifelong and consummate students of history, culture, and warfare; the art of cultivating empathy for areas of terrain in which the United States Army operates is what will make the difference in engaging insurgents, and cultivating the population. Commander Aboul-Enein has brought to life an Arabic multivolume work of military significance to our forces deployed or deploying to Iraq. The *Armor* Journal is not just

a military magazine, but also a forum for ideas, which presents us a clear opportunity to use essays such as this one as valuable teaching tools for our forces. It is a delight that *Armor* has collaborated with Naval Institute Press to bring together all eleven essays in this series to educate our combat forces on the nuances and complexity of Iraq. I would like to close this foreword by thanking Commander Aboul-Enein for taking the time to put “pen to paper” and bring to life this important work, and to our readers both at home and overseas, let me end with the motto of the United States Army *Armor*: “Forge the Thunderbolt and Strike First!”

INTRODUCTION

Al-Wardi devotes his final volume, labeled Volume 6, Supplemental, of his *Social Glimpses of Iraqi Modern History*, to discussing external characters, movements, and personalities that have shaped Iraq. Of his eight books, two full books make up Volume 5, on Iraq’s 1920 Revolt, and two full books make up Volume 6, on the establishment of Iraq’s monarchy. In this last chapter, the rivalry between Sherief Hussein ibn Ali of Mecca, who also was king of the Hijaz, and Ibn Saud, the sultan of the Najd, is highlighted. Al-Wardi examines the overreach and hubris of Sherief Hussein ibn Ali that led to his downfall, and the handing down of a realm along the Red Sea coast much weakened both externally and internally to his son Ali ibn Hussein. This final chapter will focus on al-Wardi’s historical chapters on Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud of the Najd, and his archrival Ali ibn Hussein of Mecca and their battle for the control of the Hijaz. Events such as the rise of Ibn Saud and the fall of the Hashemites in Arabia would have an impact not only in Iraq, which remained under Hashemite rule until 1958, but also in the historical outlook of Jordan as well. The Jordanian monarch is the only remaining Hashemite monarchy set up after World War I; the current monarch, King Abdullah II is a direct descendant of Hussein ibn Ali. Studying this history from al-Wardi’s Arab perspective delivers you directly into the mind of the region. Both our allies and adversaries in the Middle East can use such recognition and appreciation of this vantage point in history to weave a mutual narrative. This will serve to cultivate a clear understanding of the human terrain of the region.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF IBN SAUD

Al-Wardi's chapter on Ibn Saud opens with his exile in the so-called Empty Quarter of Arabia under the protection of the Murrah tribe, and his exile later in his childhood in Kuwait under the protection of Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah, the emir. The Ibn Sauds had lost their ancestral lands in the Najd to the Ibn Rashids and their tribal confederation; this loss included the capture of Ibn Saud's capital Riyadh. Al-Sabah considered the Ibn Rashids to be rivals, and cultivated the Ibn Sauds in a Machiavellian plan to throw this family back into the Najd to keep the region unstable and thereby keep Kuwait free of Najd marauders. In late 1901, in a story told and retold by Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud himself that has become part of Saudi Arabia's history, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud led forty horsemen to recapture Riyadh, and defeated his archrival Ibn Rashid. On January 15, 1902, Ibn Saud and forty horsemen, now aided by tribes bearing animosity towards Ibn Rashid as well as looking forward to the opportunity for plunder, took Riyadh. In thirty years, through conquest, tribal alliances, and religious fanaticism, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud not only captured his ancestral homeland of the Najd, but also became undisputed leader of Arabia, creating the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Al-Wardi attributes Ibn Saud's success to these factors:

- Ibn Saud was a patient student of tribal politics. For instance, he gladly accepted the mentorship of the sheikh of Kuwait Mubarak al-Sabah. Ibn Saud perceived tribal politics not simply as a vehicle to amass power, but also as the art of the possible. Ibn Saud learned much in the court of al-Sabah. Sitting for countless hours with rosary in hand, he absorbed lessons on compromise, justice, providing for tribal elders, dividing the spoils, dispersing benefits, and arbitrating disputes.
- Ibn Saud surrounded himself with advisers not only from Arabia's different regions, but also from the wider Arab world. He selected advisers based on what they could teach him, soliciting direct and candid opinions from those advisers, yet retaining the final decision for himself. Other Arab leaders, by contrast, routinely surrounded themselves with courtiers and supplicants. Ibn Saud was given advice

based on the reality of his world; we call this today the practice of *realpolitik*.

- Ibn Saud spent much of his wealth for strategic advantage. Court poets from Ibn Saud and his rival Hussein best explain this strength. A saying characterizing the differences between Ibn Saud and Hussein ibn Ali was, "For Ibn Saud, money attracts men, for Hussein, money corrupts men." This difference in outlook favored Ibn Saud in his world of tribal politics.
- Ibn Saud possessed physical and moral charisma; he exuded a presence of a confident, powerful, and magnanimous Arab tribal chieftain.
- Ibn Saud viewed politics as theater, and he was reputed to be a master actor, appearing weak before adversaries when he was strong, or befriending an adversary before turning on him. Al-Wardi reports that Ibn Saud was able to produce tears on command, such as when reuniting with a friend who had turned against him, or expressing tears of joy to see an old political ally.
- Tribes believed Ibn Saud brought them luck. This is hard to explain, but he cultivated a perception that a tribe becomes lucky if associated with Ibn Saud.

IBN SAUD TRANSFORMS BEDOUIN FIGHTING UNITS: CULTIVATION OF THE IKHWAN

Ibn Saud's army was made up of Bedouins whose loyalty was exclusive to looting opportunities and spoils. Their military worth was not reliable and was based largely on material gain. Ibn Saud initiated and led a revolution in tribal warfare for the Najd. He understood that Arab leaders had increasingly cultivated regularly trained forces in addition to tribal levies. Ibn Saud studied the early Islamic period of Prophet Muhammad for inspiration. In Muhammad's time, people were divided into two groups: al-Ahraab (wandering Bedouins) and al-Muhajiroon (émigrés whose commitment to Islam and Muhammad led them to settle in Medina with him). Ibn Saud's Wahhabi clerics argued that al-Tauba, verse 98, in the Quran meant those who wanted to be true practicing Muslims should abandon the custom of the wandering

Bedouin and organize themselves into settled enclaves, much as Muhammad did in Medina, the act of *hijrah* (Prophet Muhammad's migration to Medina). This changed the personality of the Bedouin, settling them in an environment created by and steeped in Islam. This allowed them to abandon the old pre-Islamic tribal values and embrace Islamic values. Ibn Saud hoped to create a fixed core of settled Bedouins in the Najd, allowing them to demonstrate their commitment to Ibn Saud by moving into these settlements, called *hejeiras* (meaning settlements, but playing on the Arabic word for *hijrah* to give it a religious symbolism). The first settlement was created in 1911; it was called Artawiyah, and was located between Kuwait and Qassim in eastern Arabia. By 1921 Ibn Saud would have 122 settlements with more than 77,000 families settled. Each settlement had Wahhabi morals police, al-Mutawain, that enforced morality and acted as agents for Ibn Saud. These settlements received subsidies from Ibn Saud to make them viable agricultural settlements. They called one another Ikhwan (Brothers in Belief) and they were steeped in Wahhabi ideology. Ibn Saud drew a fanatical group of fighters, committed to propagating Wahhabism by force, from these settlements. They would be the frontline shock troops and skirmishers for Ibn Saud's tribal army, raised on Wahhabi zeal, and believing Ibn Saud's commitment to propagate Wahhabism as the only form of Islamic expression in Arabia. Ibn Saud revived and reinterpreted the bargain his ancestors made in 1744 with the founder of Wahhabism that created the first Saudi state, which lasted until 1818. Balancing strict Wahhabi values with the reality of the Saudi state in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries would pose a major challenge for Saudi Arabia's rulers even to this day. Al-Wardi writes that, unlike Prophet Muhammad's Medina that had the rational and commonsense personality of the Prophet, these settlements wallowed in what al-Wardi calls *tataruf* (extremism), such as condemning all Muslims not living among them as being outside the faith or apostates. They ran around with scissors cutting long robes that they viewed as a show of excessive consumption, and believed fighting to uphold Wahhabism would mean a just reward in paradise. In 1919 the Wahhabi Ikhwan would exert its might in raids against Kuwait, Jordan, Iraq, and the Hijaz; their reputation for savage brutality and giving no quarter would strike fear among the population centers of Arabia.

IBN SAUD ASSESSES THE RIGHT TIME TO STRIKE THE HIJAZ

Ibn Saud's forces took Turbah and Khurmah in 1924, and a standoff ensued between the Hashemites of Mecca and himself. It was Hussein ibn Ali, leader of the Hashimites, sherief of Mecca, and king of the Hijaz, who also added the title of "caliph" to his long list of honorifics. Hussein's declaration of being the new caliph gave Ibn Saud the chance to pounce. Hussein's decision to declare himself caliph of all Muslims alienated leaders in Egypt, angered the British, and alarmed leaders in Persia. However, the British dramatically reduced Ibn Saud's subsidy, which further fueled his motivation to take the Hijaz. Ibn Saud gambled that the British reaction would be limited to verbal objections as they increasingly saw Hussein ibn Ali's policies in the Hijaz as a liability. Additionally, Ibn Saud sought to capitalize on the opportunity to increase the zeal of his warriors using the Hashemite ban of Wahhabis from making the pilgrimage to Mecca, a required pillar in Islam. This ban that prevented the Wahhabis from going to Islam's holiest site was such an outrage that Ibn Saud needed little to stoke the embers of war against Hussein among his followers.

Ibn Saud organized a primary attack force to invade the Hijaz along the Red Sea coast. From the Najd he set out a diversionary force that would drive towards Jordan with the main thrust being Mecca. Tribes approaching Jordan and urban dwellers began fleeing the city of Amman, fearing Wahhabi massacres. The British organized a rapid reaction force of armored cars and planes that responded to the Wahhabis with concentrated strafing and bombing—leading to a massacre of the Wahhabis, resulting in Ibn Saud's forces having five hundred dead and six hundred captured. The Saudi leader was concerned that he may have underestimated the British and their reaction.

An estimated three thousand Wahhabi forces were amassing in Turbah for an invasion of the city of Taif, which was held by Hussein. Tribal forces and the Ikhwan were not regular forces that could have been called back. Their leaders were Sultan ibn Bijad and Sultan Khalid ibn Luai, the latter of which had ordered the attack that ultimately led to a collapse of Hashemite forces. King Ali ibn Hussein, the last king of the Hijaz and son of the sherief of Mecca Hussein ibn Ali, underestimated the power of the Ikhwan and waited for a British aerial strafing that never came. The last Hashemite ruler of the Hijaz expected the British Royal Air Force to mete out the same treatment when Wahhabis raided parts of Jordan and Iraq. Hussein and his son Prince Ali never comprehended the alienation they had created among British officials, or

that Jordan was strategically different from the Hijaz for British interests. The Ikhwan executed a brutal massacre in Taif, killing hundreds of those deemed not to be Wahhabi. It is at this time that Hussein, after weeks of discussions, agreed to abdicate as king of the Hijaz, giving the throne to his son Prince Ali, thinking this would placate Ibn Saud. King Ali ibn Hussein of the Hijaz remained on his throne for only fifteen months before succumbing to the momentum of the Ikhwan and Ibn Saud. Only a few weeks after his coronation the holy city of Mecca fell to the Wahhabis. Hussein, Ali, and the Hashemites beseeched the British for help. The British position was clear—noninterference in disputes over Islamic holy sites. The Wahhabis entered Mecca, demolishing the tombs of Muhammad's wife Khadija, which was located atop her home. The Wahhabi's iron-clad rule included an immediate ban on smoking and visiting cemeteries and forced "five times daily" prayer. Those found lingering in the tombs of Prophet Muhammad's companions were arrested; in the case of Indian subjects who were arrested, the British had to pay a fine for their release. Ibn Saud closely monitored the British newspapers, and although these newspapers arrived in Arabia late, via steamboat, he noted that the British labor government had fallen to a conservative government. He was gauging the British attitude towards his continuance of conquering the Hijaz. He amassed his forces and decided to invade the seaport city of Jeddah, where King Ali ibn Hussein would make his last stand. Unlike Mecca that had given up easily, however, Jeddah would provide solid resistance against Ibn Saud.

THE BATTLE OF JEDDAH (1925)

Al-Wardi is not renowned for laying out tactical details of battles in his multivolume history of Iraq; his description of the Battle of Jeddah in 1925 is an exception, however. King Ali ibn Hussein had drawn up an entrenched defensive line, made possible by Ibn Saud's hesitation to capitalize on the momentum of taking Taif and Mecca. Had he pressed onto Jeddah he would have easily taken the city without resorting to a siege. Ibn Saud was concerned that his uncontrollable Ikhwan would perpetrate massacres in Jeddah, as in Taif, leading to international intervention as many of the world's powers maintained legations in Jeddah. King Ali's war minister was Tahseen Faqir Pasha, a man with combat experience in the Ottoman Army, who was sent by King Abdullah to reinforce his brother King Ali in retaining Jeddah. King Ali's forces built a defensive line based on his experiences in defending Istanbul

during the Balkan Wars of 1912 to 1913. An Ottoman military engineer of Turkish origin, Narwas Bey, aided him in this. The line extended six miles; it was defended by twenty artillery pieces reinforced with thirty heavy machine guns and barbed wire, mines, and searchlights, because the Ikhwan attacked at night and in predawn. The army of the Hashemites collected to meet Ibn Saud were a diverse group of 1,650 men from Jordan, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Sudan, and Somalia—including criminals, street thugs, and even slaves—all to defend the line. Ibn Saud's army was six thousand deep, armed with captured artillery, in particular the cannons captured at the Mecca arsenal that had a longer range than those fielded by the Hashemites in Jeddah.

The Battle of Jeddah in January 1925 began with both sides exchanging artillery, and with the Ikhwan taunting tribes allied to King Ali to defect and join Ibn Saud while firing artillery into trenches. Aside from the different soldiers imported from the Levant to fight Ibn Saud, several commanders undermined the Hashemite unity of effort. The commanders included the Iraqi Jameel Rawi Pasha, Tahseen Pasha, King Ali, and a Syrian general. From an armament perspective, King Ali's forces should have easily defeated the Wahhabis—he had planes and armored cars. Of his six Italian planes, however, only two were functioning, and he had only one pilot, a Russian who needed to be coerced to return to Jeddah and fly. Although they had the two planes and now one pilot, along with four Russian mechanics, they lacked proper ordnance so modified artillery shells were devised. The pilot refused the idea of throwing hand-grenades, and a young Syrian who sneaked on board detonated a grenade by accident that blew up one plane in the air, killing the Russian pilot. Having the plane crash near the tent of Ibn Saud bolstered his reputation for being extremely lucky. Ibn Saud's war spoil claim of King Ali's coveted possessions were four German aircraft equipped with machine guns and proper ordnance. King Ali was unaware of these planes in their crates. King Ali's armored forces were antiquated and in a state of disrepair, ultimately leading to an Ibn Saud victory on the battlefield.

FINAL CONFRONTATION IN THE BATTLE OF JEDDAH: KING ALI IBN HUSSEIN DEPARTS

The largest confrontation in the Battle for Jeddah would occur on March 14, 1925; the Hashemites brought longer-range cannons from Medina and sent

four regiments of troops on a front extending two miles, reinforced by five armored cars to push the Wahhabi lines. The Wahhabi lines held as they fought tenaciously; it was revealed during this fight with the Saudis, however, that King Ali's forces had retreated after five hours of fighting, and were making their way back to their own lines. In the holy month of Ramadan, Ibn Saud and King Ali agreed to a truce. Ibn Saud's Ikhwan were more disciplined, and King Ali's forces complained for lack of funds, support, and seemed to want more and more goods in exchange for their loyalty. King Ali's forces finally refused to obey orders after the king missed their regular salaries. Egyptians complaining about nonpayment were allowed to return to their country. No provisions were made for the civilian population, which starved before the eyes of King Ali's forces. This led to Jeddah's notables negotiating with King Ali ibn Hussein on behalf of the starving population. This population began to drain King Ali's army resources. When it became impossible for King Ali to maintain control of Jeddah, the British consul in the city brokered a surrender; the Wahhabis had cut off all access into Jeddah except by sea. The British maintained their position of not interfering in the rivalry between King Ali and Ibn Saud. King Ali's forces collapsed internally, and Jeddah's mercantile leaders wanted an end to the siege. On December 22, 1925, King Ali, through negotiations with the British consul, sailed away from Jeddah on board four ships, which carried his entourage and personal belongings, to include Arabian stallions, servants responsible for his personal care, carpets, cash, and jewels. He agreed to leave Ibn Saud all weapons, planes, armored cars, rifles, and artillery. Of note, twenty-one of King Ali's slaves were emancipated, turned over to the British consul, and repatriated back to Africa. King Ali departed for Aden, then Bombay, and finally settled in Basra.

IBN SAUD AND HIS WAHHABI ZEALOTS OFFEND A WIDER MUSLIM WORLD

Al-Wardi discusses how Ibn Saud was now on the horns of a dilemma, balancing the management of the Islamic holy places and the interest regional powers (including Egypt, British India, French North Africa, Iraq, Jordan, French Syria, the Persian Gulf states, and the wider Muslim world) had in Ibn Saud's control of Mecca and Medina. Wahhabis and the Ikhwan living in isolation

in the Najd was one point of contention but was tolerable; however, now the Ikhwan would be exposed to various Islamic practices that greatly angered them, and quickly led to an international crisis. One early reported incident was a group of Afghans praying near and in the Cave of Hira (where Muhammad had received the first revelations) who were shot by the Ikhwan. Their imposition of Wahhabism was angering regional powers. When Ibn Saud's forces took over the Prophet's city of Medina, they destroyed all tombs of the Prophet's companions, Muhammad's wives, Muhammad's uncle Abbas, and of Caliph Uthman. Four Shiite imams were buried in Medina; their tombs were destroyed by the Wahhabis, leading to objections from Iraq and Persia. Ibn Saud moved against the Ikhwan when they began attacking and assaulting pilgrims in 1926, such as the Egyptian consul, Dutch deputy consul representing Muslims from their colony in Indonesia, and British Indian deputy consul. The Egyptian *mahmal* carrying the annual cloth covering of the Kaaba was attacked, and Egyptian troops that made up the guard contingent of this cloth fired into the attacking Ikhwan, killing more than two dozen. This event led to a break in relations between Egypt and Ibn Saud that lasted from 1926 to 1936. In 1928 Ikhwan raiders assaulted Iraq and British planes strafed them once again; that would be the final year in which Ibn Saud's fanatical Ikhwan attacked Iraq. Eventually this fanatical group turned against Ibn Saud himself in 1929. In that year, Ibn Saud sent his forces to pacify the renegade Ikhwan led by Feisal al-Dawish, and the old warrior Sultan ibn Bijad who had led Ibn Saud to victory in the Hijaz. Sultan ibn Bijad would be killed in the battle and Feisal al-Dawish would flee and be captured by the British, dying in a Riyadh prison a few years later. Victims' families of the massacre at Sabila would be raised being told stories of Ibn Saud's betrayal to uphold and spread Wahhabism. Some of these descendants would lead the 1979 takeover of the grand mosque in Mecca. Al-Wardi's final pages end with wars to contain Ibn Saud's forces in Iraq, the Arab Gulf states, and Yemen. Khalid ibn Luai, the relative assaulted by Prince Abdullah ibn Hussein who then joined Ibn Saud, became Ibn Saud's governor of Mecca. Ibn Saud had become leader of most of the Arabian Peninsula, however, and in 1932 declared the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In fewer than six years, American engineers would discover the largest oil deposits in the known world, starting with the well called Dammam Dome

Number 7; Saudi Arabia would enter a new phase in its history, and would now have the money to spread their distinct brand of Islamist beliefs.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

My primary objective of this multipart exposé of the father of Iraqi sociology, Dr. Ali al-Wardi, is to enhance the reader's perspective of Iraq and its neighboring countries. I hope we can agree that the best books and writings on any subject leave the reader wanting more, and I certainly hope this book compiling my essays on al-Wardi has accomplished this goal. If you are interested in furthering your understanding of Iraq, Phebe Marr's *Modern History of Iraq* (Westview Press, 2003) is a good start. After getting a general idea of Iraq's history, read Patrick Cockburn's excellent biography *Muqtada* (Scribners, 2008) on the radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and the Sadrist movement he inherited from his father. There are a few excellent books on Shiism, most notably Vali Nasr's *The Shia Revival* (W. W. Norton, 2006), which is very well written. In addition, if you encounter variants of stories recounted in al-Wardi's volumes while serving in the field, do not hesitate to contact *Armor* or Naval Institute Press and join the debate by submitting your story through the Naval Institute blog. A good essay or book stimulates robust debate, which then enhances the overall learning experience for all who participate. Finally, these essays and this book are part of my advocacy to have Arabic works of military significance highlighted and made available for debate, discussion, and teaching of our combat forces and America's military leaders. I would like to conclude by thanking the U.S. Army *Armor* journal and the Naval Institute Press for making this book possible.

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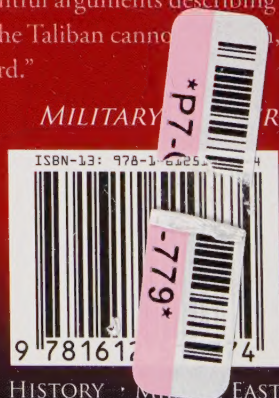
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